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The Shape of Things

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WITH THE APPROACH OF THE ANNUAL convention of the American Federation of Labor, the voice of the peacemaker is heard within the two hostile camps which have pitched their tents in the field of American labor since the last convention and provided spirited and significant controversy for the enlightenment of the general public as well as of the mass of workers. Max Zaritsky of the Hatters' Union is the active agent in the negotiations now going on between the Committee for Industrial Organization, headed by John L. Lewis, and the executive council of the American Federation of Labor. These negotiations had reached an apparent deadlock at the time these lines were written. The executive council had agreed to the proposal by Mr. Zaritsky that committees from the federation and the C. I. O. should hold a conference. It had insisted, however, that the C. I. O. must dissolve before the executive council would revoke suspension of its constituent unions and allow them to be represented as regular members in the next convention. The C. I. O. in turn had reiterated its refusal to dissolve until the executive council should agree to the industrial organization of steel and the other mass-production industries. This of course is the crucial point. If the C. I. O. dissolves and its constituent unions enter the convention without first obtaining this stipulation and nailing it down tight, industrial organization of steel can again be voted down by a majority—and the craft unions can probably rally a majority. John Lewis is reported to be standing firm. He can hardly do otherwise without sacrificing the enormous prestige he has acquired in the past year with the public and the unorganized millions.

*

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN for the settlement of the crisis arising from the recent assassinations of Japanese citizens have been under way in Nanking for nearly three weeks. Despite a concentration of Japanese war vessels at Shanghai nearly as large as that of January, 1932, Nanking has shown no sign of giving way to Tokyo's sweeping demands. Caught between growing agitation on the part of the Chinese public for resistance and intensified pressure from Japan, Chiang Kai-shek has resorted to the dilatory tactics for which his countrymen are famous. During the first week negotiations were held up awaiting Chiang's return from Canton. The next week he retired to his summer home in Kuling and denied himself to visitors. On his return to

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Nanking he held several conferences with Ambassador Kawagoe and then turned the negotiations over to Chang Chun, Minister of Foreign Affairs, with the stipulation that they should be continued only if Japan consented to deal "on a basis of equality, justice, and respect for the sovereignty of China," which, of course, neatly begged the question. In the face of this "unsatisfactory" response on the part of Nanking the Japanese have moved with unusual caution. No open demands have yet been made and no time limit has been set for the termination of negotiations. But while Japan apparently is not anxious to prod China to the point of war, it has not given any indication of whittling down the terms of its secret ukase. Both countries are stalling for time, hoping against hope that hostilities can be avoided.

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THE LATEST REPORTS FROM THE SPANISH front are somewhat more reassuring than those received at the end of last week. Although the rebels have made progress in the sector to the west of Madrid, they have not —up to the time of going to press—reached a point where they immediately threaten the capital. On the Toledo front the government forces have moved to within two miles of their former stronghold and are intrenched at Olias de Rey, about thirty-five miles south of Madrid. Rebel air raids have damaged the Valencia-Madrid railway, but the insurgents have so far been unable to cut this vital line of communication. In the north General Mola's troops captured the important town of Siguenza on the Madrid-Saragossa railway, but later lost it in a counter-attack. The most serious threat to Madrid is in the Escorial area, where the Moors and Foreign Legion appear to have broken through and inflicted a substantial defeat on the untrained government militia. Elsewhere along the sixty-mile arc surrounding the city the situation is unchanged. As the government forces outnumber the rebels by a considerable margin, the decisive factor in the struggle is likely to be the supply of arms. The lull in the fighting during the early part of last week was attributed to the rebels' lack of munitions, a deficiency that was later remedied, according to the *Times* correspondent, by the arrival of supplies from "abroad." If the democratic countries could be maneuvered into a position where they would match the aid sent by the fascist powers, Madrid would yet have an excellent chance of pulling through.

*

THESE ARE NOT COMFORTABLE DAYS FOR Father Coughlin. Following the arrival of Cardinal Pacelli in this country, the radio priest developed throat trouble which prevented him from addressing an open-air meeting in Newark. Suddenly the candidates of his Union Party were scratched in Albany. Father Ryan, long noted as one of the few liberal members of the upper Catholic hierarchy in America, in a radio speech on October 8, denounced him in vigorous terms. In plain words, he told him that it was a sin to lie. Besides administering this lesson in the catechism, Father Ryan took sharp issue with the priest of the Little Flower in his "despicable assertion that the President of the United States is a Communist." He attacked Father Coughlin's economic views, stating that his "explanation of our economic maladies is as least 50 per cent wrong, and that his monetary remedies are at least 90 per cent wrong." In his reply to these charges, Father Coughlin was evidently on the defensive. He indulged in no personal attack, he spoke no more of blood and bullets, and he neglected to repeat that President Roosevelt was anti-God. He was even quoted in the press as stating that if he did not have his own candidate in the field he would advise his followers to vote for Roosevelt. These events all tend to bear out Mr. Farrell's thesis on another page of this issue. The church is wise in politics. The chances of President Roosevelt's reelection increase daily. While the church does not seem ready to silence the radio priest, it will probably be tolerant of Father Ryan's liberalism. For the church's policies are calculated with an eye to its own ultimate advantage.

*

SENATOR ROYAL S. COPELAND, WHO HAS been nursing along the sadly weakened food-and-drug bill, has now turned the patient over to the manufacturers of patent medicines. At a conference this week Dr. Copeland discussed with leading members of the Proprietary Association how the bill might be further revised to meet the approval of the industry. The consultation between the doctor and the medicine men was conducted with the greatest secrecy, and the meeting was opened with a warning that the press must not even learn it had taken place. The impropriety of Dr. Copeland's collaboration with the Proprietary Association is too obvious to require comment. Apparently there is no justification for the rumor that at the next session a bill providing real protection for the consuming public will be introduced.

*

WHY DID BRITAIN ABANDON SANCTIONS? Why is the British rearmament program now receiving the support not only of the Conservative government but of the Labor Party and even the church? The alleged answer to these questions is contained in a news release of the Imperial Policy Group recently sent out from London. The Imperial Policy Group began its activities a little more than two years ago, and it then consisted of the Earl of Mansfield, Kenneth de Courcy, and a couple of M. P.'s. It has now grown until it numbers fifty-five members in the two houses of Parliament. Its program is strictly nationalistic and isolationist; it favors a large army and navy, a strict limitation of European commitments, and a "vigorous government"—not fascist, you understand, but one that is strong and will take no nonsense from any other country. The group claims not only to have pressed the government to abandon sanctions but to have "worked in every possible direction to help Sir Samuel Hoare and to prevent his resignation." It has sent an unofficial commission to Europe to interview the heads of the various governments, notably Signor Mussolini, Dr. Benes, Chancellor von Schuschnigg, and Hitler's ambassador at large, Herr von Ribbentrop. Its latest success was to call

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"the Bishops of the Church of England together in the House of Commons," and to tell them "in perfectly plain words that unless the churches supported rearmament and took a patriotic line and withdrew their support from the League of Nations, they would lose their following among the majority of young people." Whether or not Mr. Baldwin and the bishops were duly impressed by these arrogant and fascistic (if not fascist) young men, the fact remains that official British policy agrees to an alarming extent with theirs.

*

MEETING IN CLEVELAND ON OCTOBER 8 TO 10, the Cooperative League of the United States recorded the progress and urged the necessity of consumer cooperation. Although they have but a fraction of the power of such groups in the Scandinavian countries and even in the British Isles, consumer cooperatives are growing with amazing speed in this country. In the bad years 1929 to 1934 the cooperative purchase of farm supplies increased from $125,000,000 to $250,000,000. Moreover, according to Dr. James P. Warbasse, president of the league, business failures during the depression years among the 1,500 member societies were both numerically and proportionately insignificant when compared with profit businesses. There is no record of the failure of a wholesale cooperative group. Unquestionably the union and organization of consumers in buying and distribution will help to mitigate the worst evils of the profit system. But there are limits to the advantages of consumer cooperation. As George Nelson, Socialist candidate for Vice-President, saltily puts it in Mr. Rorty's article elsewhere in this issue: "Cooperation is a good crutch to limp with," but it won't put the workers and farmers on their two feet.

*

AS HOSTS OF THE 1940 OLYMPIC GAMES THE Japanese are even now preparing the country to receive the barbarians from the West. *Eiji-san,* or "Mr. Foreigner," is to be made as comfortable as possible, defeated in the games as often as possible, and sent home as charmed as possible with his visit. To do all three at once will call for finesse. We have always thought "Oriental guile" a much overrated quality, but if it exists, 1940 or never will be the time to use it. Already, we hear, the problem of getting the Japanese tongue to cope with the English *l* is being made the subject of scientific research. Later classes will be organized to teach waiters, taxi drivers, policemen, bell-hops, and geishas how not to say "Orympics." But athletic training will naturally receive the most attention. Impressed by the prowess of the American Negroes at Berlin, the Japanese, not to be outdone, are mobilizing the swift-running savages from the island of Formosa. These aborigines have learned speed by playing an ancient game known as head-hunting, in which the goal is somebody's head shriveled small and tied to a pole. You can't get greyhounds to race without a mechanical rabbit to lead them on, and we wonder if the Formosans will run at all unless a prize is held out. Of course there is always Avery Brundage.

The Soviets Force a Showdown

THE Soviet government's warning that it would withdraw from the non-intervention pact if Germany, Italy, and Portugal continued to give direct aid to Spanish rebels is the first sign of resistance to the drift toward a fascist Europe. It is unfortunate that the Soviet Union should be the first to come to the rescue of Spain. Any action that the Soviets take will seem to justify the rebel charge of "Communist" influence on the Madrid government. France, as a sister republic with a Popular Front government much like that of Spain, has a far greater stake in the outcome of the war and is geographically in a position to send immediate and effective aid. But M. Blum is committed to "neutrality," and not even the specter of a fascist France has dislodged him from his position. There was even less hope that Great Britain would come to the aid of Spanish democracy. Although the very existence of the British Empire would seem to depend on the frustration of German and Italian ambitions in the Spanish islands and African possesssions, Britain's ruling class appears to have been taken in completely by the fascist propaganda concerning the "red" Madrid regime.

Each week has brought increasing evidence of the extent of German and Italian assistance to the Spanish rebels. Rebel censors no longer take the trouble to delete references to Junker planes or "ammunition from abroad" from the dispatches of American correspondents. The efforts of the London committee on non-intervention in Spain had no effect on the steady stream of supplies passing through Lisbon. Even when faced with strong Soviet pressure, the committee has displayed more energy in seeking to prevent defections from its ranks than in attempting to stop munitions shipments to Spain. German and Italian counter-charges, completely lacking in concrete evidence, were given equal weight with Soviet charges based either on authoritative neutral sources or on photographs and captured war supplies.

The chances are overwhelming that Europe will be divided into two hostile camps on the Spanish issue. Recent reports indicate that the Little Entente, which hitherto has been united on foreign policy, has already split on the question, with Czecho-Slovakia supporting Russia in demanding that the Spanish loyalists be given the aid to which they are entitled under international law as the legitimate government of Spain, and with Rumania and Yugoslavia on the side of the rebels. Should such a fundamental division between the democratic and autocratic nations develop throughout Europe, the democratic countries would obviously be in a worse position than if they had never sponsored the non-intervention pact. At the beginning of the conflict any assistance they might have given the Madrid government would have been entirely legal, while the fascist powers would have had to risk the stigma of illegality in helping the rebels. The neutrality

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pact made it illegal for the democratic powers to aid the Spanish government, but did not impose any additional barrier against help to the rebels. On the contrary, it probably stimulated German and Italian assistance by greatly increasing the chances of rebel success; not even a fascist likes to back the wrong horse. The agreement has had the further result of putting the democratic countries in a position where any future aid that they may extend to Madrid will be technically illegal, while Germany and Italy could justify their assistance to the rebels on the ground that Russia and France had broken their agreement. The situation is filled with dynamite, yet the fact remains that almost any action in defense of democracy is less risky than allowing the fascist powers a free hand in Spain.

Republican vs. Democratic Relief

DURING the past week relief took its rightful place as one of the most important issues in the campaign. Charges and counter-charges as to the administration and political complexion of the WPA flew thick and fast between the lesser spokesmen of the two camps, and it was no accident that the fight centered on the politics of relief in the doubtful state of Pennsylvania.

The main engagement occurred between the two principals when, on the same day, Landon and Roosevelt made speeches in which the issue was actually joined. The burden of Roosevelt's thesis was that relief is a national problem to be met nationally; he would continue to use relief funds for a wide range of public improvements. Landon, on the other hand, would return the administration and planning of relief and part of the financing to state and local agencies; he is opposed to the use of relief labor, at relief wages, for the construction of federal public works. "If the government," he said, "will give American initiative a chance, 11,000,000 men and women will not long be looking vainly for jobs." These are fine words; but they serve to bring back in a way which will not win votes for Mr. Landon another rugged Republican who practiced Mr. Landon's theory to the bitter end in the fall of 1932. The fact that the history of Republican relief forms the most sprightly half of a new book by Harry Hopkins entitled "Spending to Save" will no doubt also be set down in Republican quarters as playing politics with relief.

Herbert (Canute) Hoover for three long years not only tried to hold back the flood of unemployment and misery by shouting "Prosperity is just around the corner," but demonstrated his confidence in his own powers by refusing to feed the hungry, by shooting the bonus army out of the national capital, and by lying about the extent of joblessness. He was consistent to the very end. On October 22, 1932, just before the waters closed over his head, he protested bitterly to the electorate, 12,000,000 of whom by that time were unemployed, that the Democrats had forced the passage of the Emergency Relief and Construction Act, which appropriated $300,000,000 to be allotted to the individual states for human relief.

Throughout, well-fed right-hand men stood beside the President and defended him from socialistic legislators. They devised campaigns with such slogans as "Spruce up!" "Give a job," and "Spread the work," all of them calculated to put the burden of relief chiefly on low-income groups still fortunate enough to have jobs. The ideologists of the day were Walter S. Gifford, who felt that an employee with a six-day job had no right to complain if his employer asked him to share it with another worker; Irenée du Pont, who told Mr. Gifford in 1931 that he could not guarantee to raise adequate funds for relief in Delaware unless the wealthy were assured that Congress would not raise the income-tax rate or "remove the provision whereby losses may be offset against other income"; and Myron C. Taylor, who in 1931 proclaimed that "the individual with a will to work must fit himself into the new scheme of things" and accept whatever job was at hand.

There was one exception. This was Arthur Woods, who headed the President's Emergency Committee for Employment set up in October, 1930. This committee made recommendations to President Hoover which, if followed, might have lengthened his public career. The suggested message which is printed in Mr. Hopkins's book was full of Rooseveltian phrases: "The ravages of unemployment must in our minds be compared to the ravages of war or disease. It is the great blot on our economic system today." Its remedies were Rooseveltian remedies. It proposed a vast program of public works, including highways, low-cost housing, rural electrification. "We have the resources, the materials, the labor, and the skill. An effort should be made to release these forces in correcting a long-recognized defect and in increasing the health, safety, and beauty of our communities." In a memorandum dated November 11, 1930, Colonel Arthur Woods recommended a two-billion-dollar construction program.

The recommendations went unheeded. Instead Mr. Hoover told Congress that the country was fundamentally sound. Instead of quoting the Woods committee's recent conservative estimate of 5,000,000 unemployed, he used an April estimate of the Census of Unemployment which put the figure at 2,500,000. He asked for an appropriation of from $100,000,000 to $150,000,000.

The relief record of Herbert Hoover seems, in 1936, almost incredible in its stupidity and cruelty. By using it as a foil for the activities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Harry Hopkins has produced a campaign handbook from which party workers and voters will be able to extract endless material. The easy conclusion—the one which Mr. Farley no doubt hopes the average voter will draw—is that it is the Democratic Party which has met the issue of relief and, as a corollary, that the Republican Party, if returned to power, would duplicate the Hoover record. And Mr. Landon's speech at Cleveland lends color to the suggestion. The truth is, however, that during the depression the people of the United States for

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the first time in history were confronted with the problem of unemployment and relief which the European nations have known on a much smaller scale for decades. Today the public understanding of that problem is such that no administration, short of a military dictatorship, would dare to repeat the Hoover formula. At the same time there is no doubt that Harry Hopkins personally and the relief administration as a whole has conceived of work-relief as a constructive force and has fostered the conviction among its recipients that the government of the United States owes to its citizens social security, health, the opportunity to work—and even the opportunity to enjoy life.

> We have turned over the American board [writes Mr. Hopkins] and seen how many people live like slugs beneath its plenty. . . . The regeneration of the individual worker no longer needs to be the only concern of a national work program for the unemployed. We have come to a second concept, which is that his work is necessary to enrich the national life.

The American people have come a long way since 1929 in their thinking and feeling about questions of security and government responsibility. They know now, for instance, that unemployment is neither accidental nor temporary. Large sections of employed and unemployed know even better than Mr. Hopkins how inadequate present relief is; they are learning that the Roosevelt word is always more eloquent than the deed and that there is a growing tendency, as Mr. Ward points out on another page, to curtail both the quality and quantity of relief.

No average American will find it hard to choose between Republican relief—the dole—and Democratic relief, inadequate as it is. Meanwhile behind the fireworks over relief remains the monstrous fact of 11,000,000 still unemployed, although recovery is already far advanced. On that issue neither party has been heard from in convincing terms.

Steps Toward Economic Disarmament

THE action of Italy and France in reducing tariffs and eliminating quotas in connection with the revaluation of their currencies has stimulated the efforts of the Economic Committee of the League to bring about a general leveling of trade barriers. For the first time since the break-up of the London Economic Conference there seems to be a definite possibility that the world trend toward economic nationalism can be checked. With the exception of the Reichsmark, all the principal world currencies have been revalued at a point where they are in approximate equilibrium. In its reciprocal trade agreements the United States has made a breach, small though it may be, in the growing barriers to trade. The French and Italian trade concessions may seem insignificant as compared with the new obstacles created by devaluation, but they contrast markedly with the increased tariffs which Great Britain imposed after it abandoned the gold standard in 1931 and with the failure of the United States to make compensatory adjustments when it devalued the dollar in 1933.

Thus despite the short-sighted economic policies adopted by most countries in the past few years, the international economic structure is more nearly balanced than at any time since 1929. As a result of tremendous losses on both private and public loans, the international investments of the United States have been reduced to manageable proportions. In spite of devaluation and spasmodic increases in the tariff, our normal "favorable" balance of trade has been transformed into an "unfavorable" balance. This is due not so much to a rise in imports as to a tremendous decrease in exports, but the effect, as far as stability is concerned, is approximately the same. Doubtless the minor tariff concessions made in the Hull reciprocal agreements have helped, as have the drought and the crop-reduction program under the AAA, but the primary factor in bringing adjustment has been the gradual rise in domestic prices which has accompanied the recovery movement. Whatever was the situation in 1933 and 1934, the dollar is no longer undervalued in terms of world currencies.

Nevertheless, the basic drift toward economic nationalism will not be easily reversed. Along with the favorable factors in the present situation are others which are clearly ominous. The Italians set a dangerous precedent by revaluing their currency 10 per cent below that of France and Switzerland. Great Britain has allowed the pound to drift to its lowest point in many months. President Roosevelt has just announced that he will ask Congress for a renewal of authority empowering him to reduce the value of the dollar to 50 per cent of its former gold content. The British representative at Geneva has made it clear that England is unwilling to make any reduction in its tariff, and has intimated that he cannot guarantee that the pound will be maintained at its present value unless France abolishes all its quotas. This France declares to be impossible as long as Germany maintains its exchange controls and its abnormal clearing and barter agreements, and continues to subsidize its exports. Yet the Reich would probably be compelled to retain its exchange controls even if the mark were devalued. Lacking a reserve of gold or foreign currency, it would have no way of defending the mark unless it were granted a substantial credit by one of the other powers.

At first sight the three-power "stabilization" agreement between Great Britain, France, and the United States would appear to intensify the danger that monetary manipulation may become an accepted weapon of economic nationalism. As a compromise between a fluctuating currency and a fixed gold standard, the new plan has none of the advantages of either. A paper currency, though subject to violent fluctuations which can be reduced by an exchange stabilization fund, will ultimately adjust itself to its true purchasing-power value. The gold standard provides a mechanism whereby world prices may automatically be brought into alignment, and has the additional advantage of being free from political manipulation. The present scheme contains no automatic mech-

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anism for the stabilization either of exchange or prices. Each county is to retain full independence in establishing a day-by-day rate at which gold is to be bought and sold. This opens a wide and extremely treacherous area to the conflict of nationalistic forces. What the policy of the various governments will be under existing circumstances remains to be seen. A few years ago each country was striving desperately to raise the exchange value of its currency for reasons of national prestige. As this proved disastrous, efforts have been more recently directed toward reducing the exchange value of the currencies as far as possible without provoking immediate retaliation. Either course is filled with danger, and until our political authorities grasp some of the basic facts of world interdependence it is wise to have our currency systems as automatic and free from political control as possible.

Essentially, the vicious circle of tariffs, quotas, exchange restrictions, and currency depreciation remains unbroken. But psychologically the present situation is much more favorable than that of three years ago. Domestic recovery has developed sufficiently in many countries to lessen the blind drive toward nationalism. Not a few countries have reached the stage at which the fallacies of autarchy have become glaringly obvious. Today the most serious obstacles to world economic stability are political rather than economic. Although it is hard to see how the prevailing demand for national independence in monetary affairs can be reconciled with a liberalizing of trade restrictions, it is even harder to envision Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia reaching an amicable economic agreement. The ever-present threat of war makes it imperative for countries like Germany and Italy to continue to seek self-sufficiency even though they are seriously in need of food and raw materials.

At the moment when constructive leadership is desperately needed at Geneva, it is particularly unfortunate that the United States should be engaged in a Presidential campaign in which the opposition party is assailing the meager concessions made in the trade pacts. As one of the two leading creditor countries, the United States must assume at least a part of the burden of leadership. The election obviously prevents the Administration from making the gesture that would be most likely to inspire a favorable response—an offer of a general reduction in the American tariff as part of a world program of economic disarmament. There still remains, however, a kind of leadership which the President could very advantageously exercise. Thus far the discussions at Geneva have been seriously obstructed by the narrowness of the frame of reference. Economic nationalism will yield only to a frontal attack on all phases of the problem simultaneously. Trade barriers are inextricably connected with such problems as colonies and the distribution of raw materials. As a leading creditor and as the owner of the richest stores of raw material, the United States might well take the initiative in asking that the present discussions be broadened to include a study of these fundamentals. The obstacles to a more general agreement of this type are enormous, but without it any attack on trade barriers is bound to fail.

How to Dress Though a Voter

IN THESE loud-mouthed October days it is remarkable that no one has said anything about keeping politics out of fashions. Yet this is a crucial question on which we feel the public should be enlightened without delay. It all began with a taxi strike in Paris following the victory of the Front Populaire last May. One spring evening the Avenue de L'Opéra was electrified to see a gentleman bicycling to the opera in top hat, white tie, and tails. In no time bicycling became the rage. This demanded a special costume, and with promptitude the great designers rushed into the breach. Any day thereafter the *haut monde* in shorts, slacks, knickers, and culottes could be seen bowling gaily through the Bois de Boulogne. It was all delightfully democratic, says *Vogue,* describing how the Princesse Jean Louis de Faucigny-Lucinge appeared in gray flannel shorts, Tyrolean sandals, and sapphires from Cartier.

Reflecting the revolutionary feeling, the mid-season collections showed Robespierre stiff collars, Danton tailcoats, Little Corporal tricornes; and Schiaparelli, oracle of the Place Vendôme, came out with a "liberty cap" described as having a "forward, upward movement." As her comment on the somewhat heterogeneous composition of what *Vogue,* still new to political reporting, calls "the Front Populaire, Blum's party," Schiaparelli made a sensation with her cotton-print evening dress in imitation of a patchwork quilt. Meanwhile, continues our faithful chronicler, a marquise is heard to call Stalin by his first name and Monsieur is buying cravats "in the popular colors of the lower classes." A neighboring revolution, too, is reflected in the fashions. "While the daughters of Spain wage war," we learn from *Harper's Bazaar,* "Vionnet makes history with black-lace mantillas." Here is a thought that covers us with confusion. In our blind way during the last few months we had been anxiously following events on the battlefield, and all the time behind our backs history was really being made in a black and gold salon on the Avenue Montaigne.

In this country *Vogue,* ever up to the minute, prepares its readers for the polls. If you're a radical they suggest, among other things, "love birds for your hair." Perhaps we move in the wrong circles, but if we were faced with a love bird in someone's hair we should take it for an emblem of the lunatic fringe indicating a vote for Lemke. However, *Vogue* goes on imperturbably to recommend "a bag on a long gold chain . . . . if you're a conservative," presumably to prevent the love birds, excuse us, we mean the radicals, from snitching your carfare. If you're a "Laborite" you are advised to try "a removable peplum evening dress." We don't want to seem indelicate but just what does *Vogue* mean by "Laborite"?

In any case it looks as if our wardrobe would be quite inadequate come November 4. "James, order the Rolls, we're going out shopping for a United Front fedora."

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

It Pays to Stay on Relief

Washington, October 12

THE most amusing aspect of the Presidential campaign, aside from the fumbling stupidity of the Republican tacticians, has been the way that liberals and radicals have swallowed the propaganda of the G. O. P. and the Liberty League. The bull-roaring that has emanated from those twin citadels of reaction in denunciation of New Deal spending for relief and kindred activities seems to have so deadened the wits of many progressives that they actually have come to believe the Republicans would, if elected to power, cancel relief, wipe out the PWA, and toss back to the bread lines the thousands added to the federal pay roll under Roosevelt. The truth is, of course, that on all these points there is no material difference between the Republicans and the Democrats, and that the Republican attack, stripped of its disguises, is not an attack on relief and spending but a howl that the spending and the dishing out of jobs are handled by Democrats instead of by G. O. P. stalwarts.

In less hysterical days liberals and radicals would not have allowed themselves to lose sight of that fact, and the New Deal's smug defense of its record on these scores would have seemed as funny as the Republicans' attacks actually are. There would have been no goggle-eyed adoration of Roosevelt as the champion of the status quo. In its place there would have been demands that Roosevelt implement his bid for reelection with apologies for the status quo and a detailed explanation of how he proposes to end the scourge of unemployment in the next four years or, failing in that, put the relief system on a more decent basis. He would have been asked, for example, whether he proposes to continue his arbitrary trimming of the federal relief rolls and its attendant pushing of helpless thousands back upon the mercies of the flop houses, soup kitchens, and parish poorbaskets. He would have been asked when he intends to fulfil his Administration's announced plans for a genuine program of public works. Finally, he would have been asked to quit ogling the chambers of commerce with his pious proclamations for decentralization of relief and tell the country, instead, what he proposes to do about the existing decentralization which in many places permits the use of the relief roll as a club for beating down private wage rates.

A case in point is the recent suspension of WPA projects in a large part of Mississippi in response to the complaints of planters that they could not get their cotton picked because all their field hands were holding down WPA jobs. According to the official rules and regulations of the WPA, men are not supposed to be forced off its projects and into private employment unless the private employment offered them is reasonable and decent. The wages offered by the private employer must be high enough to support a standard of living at least comparable to that under WPA wages, and if the job offered is merely a temporary one, then the WPA worker cannot be forced to take it unless assured of reemployment on a WPA project at the conclusion of the private job. So say the rules and regulations. But they were not obeyed in Mississippi. Down there the schedule of WPA wages is $21 a month for unskilled labor, working 120 hours a month for an average of 17½ cents an hour. What do the planters pay their hands? According to the Federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the typical wage of a Mississippi farm hand in July was $17.50 for a month of 10 and 10½-hour days, and that is overstating the case, for the bureau's statistics apply in general only to the more or less permanently employed farm hand; the cotton pickers driven off the WPA rolls and into the planters' fields do not fall in that category.

There are no data available on what the Mississippi planters pay their cotton pickers, but it is possible to set down here the typical wages paid such workers in adjoining sections of the Mississippi Delta. In Concordia Parish, Louisiana, for example, 7½ cents an hour is a prevalent wage for cotton pickers. More pickers get that wage than get a higher one. Concordia Parish's cotton pickers are Negroes. In Karnes County, Texas, another Delta area, the picking is done by Mexicans. They get from 8 to 14 cents an hour with the largest fraction in the 8-cent bracket. These, mind you, are wages that actually are being paid and not merely offered, and from all these areas have come loud-voiced protests that the WPA has pauperized the pickers to a point where they prefer relief work to the labors of the field.

In too many cases, under the "decentralized" relief system, local WPA officials have obligingly responded to these protests by forcing the requisite number of men off the WPA rolls and on to the pay rolls of the planters. In Louisiana, where even the permanently employed farm hand, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, did well to average $19.75 "without board" for the month of July, the WPA wage for unskilled labor is $23.10 for a month of 128 hours, or an average of 18 cents an hour. In Texas, where the typical wage of the more or less permanently employed agricultural worker was $27.75 "without board" in July, the WPA wage for unskilled labor is $21 for a 105-hour month, or an average of 20 cents an hour. Contrast these averages with the 8 cents and 7½ cents an hour paid the cotton pickers forced off relief rolls.

These cases are not without precedent. Harry Hopkins repeatedly has stormed against them. But new in-

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stances continue to occur. The Mississippi case, for example, is not the first in that state, and the man responsible is the Mississippi WPA administrator, Wayne Alliston, in private life a clergyman. Alliston is the gentleman under whom a number of Mississippi communities were allowed to get WPA funds to build tax-exempt and rent-free factories disguised as industrial schools and designed for the use of sweatshops fleeing from union labor in the North.

Washington had another taste of General Hugh S. Johnson this week. Old Iron Pants slipped into town to appear before the National Labor Relations Board as mouthpiece for a company union. This whilom New Deal valiant—whose newspaper column recently assured the nation that Roosevelt does not think of E. T. Weir and Walter Chrysler as "economic royalists" and that if the world were only full of Weirs and Chryslers it would be paradise enow—was trying to do for David Sarnoff and the RCA what he did for Weir in 1933 and for Chrysler and the other automobile magnates in 1934, when he was NRA administrator. You will recall how, when a strike shut down the Weirton Steel plant, the workers were persuaded to return to their jobs on the promise of a collective-bargaining election, and how this was at first stalled by the NRA and then blocked by Weir himself. And you will recall how in 1934 Johnson engineered a skilful gypping of the automobile workers in a negotiation that set up the famous Wolman board, which proceeded to impose upon the workers a company-union system of such marvelous capacities that it was adopted by International Harvester in preference to its own company union. Johnson this week was engaged in a similar shenanigan. He had helped engineer a peaceful settlement of the RCA strike at Camden, a settlement that involved an election at which the workers would choose their collective-bargaining representatives. The election had been held and the outside union had won it by an overwhelming vote. But only 3,000 of the 9,000 eligible workers had voted, the usual boycott pressure having been applied in an attempt to discredit an unpreventable union victory. Johnson, fulfilling what now seems to be one of his major missions in life, roared down to Washington to tell the NLRB it must not certify the union as the collective-bargaining representative of the RCA workers. To certify the union would be "shocking" to all friends of labor like himself, Johnson said. He argued that the 6,000 RCA workers who did not vote should be recorded as desiring no representation in collective bargaining, and that the union, having polled only a "minority" of the workers, had lost the election. Which is like arguing that the 60 per cent of the eligible voters in this country who in some years do not bother to vote or do not want a President, and that in those years the White House should be boarded up and left vacant.

The Pope Needs America

BY JAMES T. FARRELL

I

THE aged Pope recently appeared before 400 exiled Spanish refugees, spoke solicitously of the mystical Body of Christ and the ills and sorrows of war-torn Spain, and called benignly for a world-wide anti-red crusade in the spirit of Christian tolerance and charity. It was a scene rich in irony, but the Catholic press was too concerned with heralding the words of the Pontiff to catch the note of irony. The Jesuit weekly *America* drew a touching contrast between the Holy Father forgiving Communists who are raping Mother Church in Spain, and Joseph Stalin brewing new vials of hatred in the Kremlin. Stalin's adherents make him out to be infallible; the church attributes to him other characteristics of the early popes, one of whom wrote in the eighth century: "Do not the Franks know that all children of the Lombards are lepers? . . . May they broil with the devil and his angels in everlasting fire!"

The Roman Catholic church has been built and defended not only with prayers and the will of the Almighty but also by means of blood and the sword. Neither the Holy Ghost nor Saint Peter ever contributed as effectively to the defense of the papacy as did, say, the Frankish king Pepin and his great son Charlemagne, who restored the weak Pope Leo III by force of arms. Down through the ages the Roman Catholic church has balanced prayers with the rack, canonization with the might of the sword, the power of wealth and oppression with appeals to the dreams and ignorance of the masses. It has, by the variety of its instruments, weathered the storms of centuries. Revolutions have come and gone, but Mother Church has remained the pillar of Christendom. In Spain today she stands with gun in hand defending churches which have been turned into arsenals. Her priests lay down their weapons to grant absolution to those who are about to be massacred by rebels wearing the badge of Mary on their sleeve and by those great defenders of Christianity, order, and authority—Mohammedan Moors. And the Vicar of Christ gently restrains them, forgives the "reds," and tacitly gives his benediction to the slaughter. The American Catholic press backs up the rebels. Thus *America* recently commented: "With such an enemy [communism] there can be no compromise; the Americans with liberal ideals will join the Bishops of Pamplona and Vittoria in calling down a blessing 'on those who at the moment are sacrificing themselves for religion and country.'" And when Michael Williams rather mildly dissented from this kind of rabidness in a recent issue of the liberal Catholic weekly

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the *Commonweal,* a priest took the trouble to write in to correct him.

The Catholic church in America has never been more alert, more militant, more on the offensive than it is at present. E. Boyd Barrett, an ex-Jesuit, has written in the opening pages of his excellent and well-documented book "Rome Stoops to Conquer": "From an insignificant group of 25,000 adherents, shepherded by 30 poor priests, in 1789, the Catholic church in America has grown to be a congregation of 20,000,000 led by 30,000 priests. From being propertyless, she has become a rich institution, whose wealth exceeds two billion dollars. From being a despised and scattered flock, she has become the most perfectly organized body in the world, enjoying immense influence and power." In an article in the *American Spectator* (January, 1936) entitled The Finances of the Catholic Church, Ferdinand Lundberg furnished detailed and illuminating corroboration of Barrett's statements. Quoting from the New York State banking records and "selecting items at random from the portfolio of the church's investments," he presented a half-page list of the corporations in which the church has invested its funds—Pure Oil, Commonwealth Edison, Goodyear Tire and Rubber, Baltimore and Ohio, and so on. The list is a directory of the industrial United States.

Many commentators have mistakenly appraised religion in terms of individual piety, the attendance records at church services, and the like. They have failed to realize that religion is an institution and that it must be studied in terms of its influence as such. Among religious institutions the Roman Catholic church is the richest, the most solidly organized, the most cohesive. The strength of its organization gives it a position in our society which no other church possesses and makes it potentially a threat to progressive forces despite the fact that piety in American life is on the decline, that many individual Catholics disregard the church's doctrines on birth control, and that many of the enrolled twenty million Catholics do not partake of the sacrament regularly. Also, its organization is strictly authoritarian and anti-democratic.

These facts are interesting, particularly at a time when Mother Church has again come forth as the Church Militant, flying the banner of Catholic Action. The center of its offensive under the leadership of the Pope is, and must be, America. America is the citadel of world capitalism. Christendom is one of the spiritual bodyguards of world capitalism. Protestant Christianity was, of course, a reflex of the rise of world capitalism. It furnished the religious ethics which served as part of the rationalized explanation of the aims and ideals of the rising middle class. The connection between the rise of capitalism and the Reformation is close. In due time Mother Church swung into line. Part and parcel of medievalism, dependent for her strength upon her land holdings in the Middle Ages, she shifted her emphasis and adapted herself to the new capitalist world economy. Today the church remains the rock of Christianity, even though it does not possess the sweeping power which it once held, even though a Hitler does not come crawling to Canossa. It is only logical that Roman Catholicism should seek to conquer in America. The death of capitalism will be the death of Mother Church. She will then be divorced from Caesar, and forced to practice her platitude of rendering unto Caesar his due, and giving unto God His due. The church will become a purely religious organization. Its power will be founded on prayer, superstition, and its ability to sell the promised joys of the kingdom of heaven. Its economic basis will be shattered. And no institution whose economic base has crumbled can survive as a social force.

Rome has lost other countries. It is now faced with the loss of Spain. Whoever wins in Spain, the church will emerge with lessened power. Fascism will reduce it to the position of a subsidiary ally. In order to retain its position, it must conquer America to compensate for its losses in other parts of the globe. Today a considerable proportion of the income of the church comes from this country. If the annual American contribution to Peter's pence were subtracted from the income of the Vatican, that income would be shrunken indeed.

For financial and other reasons the Roman Catholic church does not prefer fascism despite its alliance with Mussolini. Monarchism, Bonapartism, or capitalistic democracy is better suited to its intentions. Fascism is an expensive venture for the church, just as it is for capitalism. Fascism is a desperate attempt on the part of capitalism to save itself by hiring political Capones. These gangsters must be paid. Capitalists have to fork over some of that payment. If the church wants to survive, it also must contribute. Before Mussolini signed a concordat with the Vatican, the Black Shirts destroyed and outlawed Don Sturzo's Catholic Party, and they attacked the Catholic labor organizations as viciously as they attacked the Socialist trade unions. Even after the concordat, official attacks upon Catholic Action brought forth a papal encyclical in which the Pope complained of attacks on the youth of Catholic Action and protested repeatedly that Catholic Action was non-political. The experience of the Catholic church in fascist Germany is similar. Thus the church repeats its own history. It opposed the rise of capitalism and the bourgeoisie. It aligned itself with the aristocracy in the period of the bourgeois revolutions, and even down into the nineteenth century the papacy was anti-democratic. We are now entering a period of new wars and revolutions. The defense against revolution is fascism. If that defense is successful there follows a new distribution of power, wealth, and executive control, in which Rome does not propose but must accept terms. In order to survive, Rome must compromise and pay. For that reason the church does not prefer fascism.

In America there is no strong likelihood of fascism in the immediate future. American capitalism has not yet been forced to draw upon its reserves. The American working class has not yet become a direct revolutionary threat to capitalism. The American form of government as an instrument of capitalist state power has not yet broken down. Now is the strategic time for Rome to offset its losses in Europe by gains in the United States—before fascism unleashes all those vile and obnoxious anti-Catholic prejudices which are smoldering in the Bible belt.

[*This article will be concluded next week.*]

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Circus Politics in Washington State

BY MARY McCARTHY

"THERE are forty-seven states in the Union, and the Soviet of Washington." This rueful epigram is with some authority attributed to Postmaster Farley. With the state of Washington securely tucked under his campaign belt Mr. Farley can afford to unbend and be funny about it. Today it seems sure that Washington will go for Roosevelt on November 3, will, in fact, go the whole Democratic hog, as it did in 1932. William Randolph Hearst, who, whatever his faults, is doubtless a seasoned political observer, has tacitly admitted this fact. He has made no effort to reopen his Landon propaganda organ, the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer,* closed down in August by the Newspaper Guild strike; and he has thereby in effect renounced the Pacific Northwest and all its works.

The state of Washington is in ferment; it is wild, comic, theatrical, dishonest, disorganized, hopeful; but it is not revolutionary. Washington, it is true, has a tradition of radicalism in labor; but it has at the same time a tradition of corruption in political office. It gave America its most successful general strike; but it also pushed into the national limelight such fantastic public figures as Ole Hanson and Hi Gill, former mayors of Seattle. Its most distinguishing political characteristic has always been its sheer eccentricity. In the past this eccentricity was sporadic; it is now general. A smart promoter could now put the entire state under a tent, charge admission, and get it. Today a dozen sideshows, all nominally Democratic, are operating at once and at cross-purposes; a hundred Democratic barkers are peddling their own specially bottled political patent medicines. The state is alive, but it is not yet able to speak coherently.

The present Democratic regime, which has broken all state records for political oddity, came into power in 1932. Up to that time the state had been considered normally Republican, and no one was more surprised than the Democrats themselves when the major part of the ticket was swept into office with Mr. Roosevelt. So little was the victory anticipated, in fact, that three of the candidates elected to the legislature were, when informed of their triumph, discovered to be in trouble with the police for "statutory offenses." One of these was actually in jail for the rape of a twelve-year-old girl. A former orchestra leader, who had once run for mayor of Seattle on the platform of "A hostess on every street car" became lieutenant governor. A village lawyer who had not practiced law for twenty years was instated as attorney-general.

A general sense that the lid was off pervaded the state. The legislature was crammed with machine politicians and irresponsible ignoramuses. The minutes of the legislature are minutes of brawling, drunkenness, and disorder. Misappropriation of funds has been so common that the average voter has come to regard the honest office-holder as one who turns what graft he garners from his office over to the party, while the dishonest one keeps it for himself. Federal money, as it poured into the state for the WPA, was used, in effect, to swell the party's campaign fund. In Seattle it is generally believed that a WPA worker who showed up on his project wearing a Landon sunflower would be beaten within an inch of his life.

It might be thought that on November 3 an indignant electorate would sweep these incompetents from office. For a number of reasons they will do nothing of the sort. In the first place, the "honest" Democratic politicians have during four years built up a highly effective, well-greased, semi-benevolent machine. In the second place, Washingtonians are not disturbed by idiosyncrasy or graft in high places. Perhaps Washingtonians are still close enough in time to the frontier to retain the pioneer's respect for enterprise and cunning; at any rate, they find political chicanery more entertaining than reprehensible; while a politician who is not something of a "card" stands little chance of success.

The third reason for the strength of the Democratic Party is of more serious political significance. While the Republicans have aligned themselves decisively with the forces of reaction, the Democrats have appropriated the verbalizations, at least, of the social unrest which is simmering throughout the state. In the governorship race, which is the hottest in the state, former Governor Roland H. Hartley, Republican, wealthy timberman from Everett, is campaigning on a platform of "If I was in Olympia I would smash the *P.-I.* strike"; but Governor Clarence D. Martin, Democrat, who refused to call out troops to break the strike, is standing on his record. Most of the Democratic candidates have at one time or another played around with EPIC or the utopians or the technocrats or, most recently, with the Townsendites and the Commonwealth Federation. The Republicans, on the other hand, get their only organizational support from the Washington Industrial Council, a group of industrialists who have raised a "war chest" of $15,000,000 to break union labor in Seattle. The Democratic vote comes to a great extent from organized labor in the cities of the coast and from the organized lumberjacks of the logging camps of the tall timber, while the Republican vote comes from the conservative, prosperous small farmers in the eastern part of the state.

The Democratic Party has proved itself infinitely shrewder, more realistic, more adaptable than the Republican, which, in this state at least, is about to commit political hara-kiri for its ideals. As cooperatives have sprung up and prospered, as EPIC and the Townsend plan have gained adherents, as organized labor has tightened its hold on the waterfront and the cities, the followers of Frank-

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lin Roosevelt have moved warily toward the left. Postmaster Farley need yet, however, have no fears, for the insincerity of these politicians is almost unquestionable. Mayor Dore of Seattle, who wavered noticeably over the Newspaper Guild strike, put the whole thing rather succinctly when he said of the strike: "Four or five days I didn't know where I was at, down at the bottom or on the top. But I know now that my political future is made."

The Democratic politicians can, in their enthusiasm for following trends, occasionally overstep themselves. When the last Democratic state convention allowed itself to be captured by the Commonwealth Federation, the step was premature. The Commonwealth Federation, an organization of technocrats, liberals, and Socialists, claiming a membership of 30,000 in the state, put forward a program demanding a system of production for use, which the convention indorsed. The Old Guard Democrats were forced to take a back seat, and Howard Costigan, young Commonwealth leader, a mural painter, was the tactician of the day. The solid lower middle class was frightened by the Federation, and labor was covertly contemptuous of its crackpot leanings. The primary on September 8 became the test of the strength of the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth lost out, on the whole, to the more conservative wing of the Democratic Party. While the primary fight lasted, however, the state was on fire. Neither Senator Bone nor Senator Schwellenbach came home to partake of things political; neither Senator was ever quoted during the campaign.

The interest in the primary centered in the contest for the gubernatorial nomination. Governor Martin was opposed by a fascinating political phenomenon, John C. Stevenson, mystery man. Stevenson, a big, bland, smooth, bald-headed man with a radio voice that sets old ladies a-weeping, was six years ago elected county commissioner for King County. His origins were at that time unknown, and they remain so. When he first appeared to take his seat as commissioner his citizenship was challenged. It was believed that he was a Canadian or even that he was a native of one of the Mediterranean countries. At the hearing he attested his citizenship, though he kept his birthplace secret, and declared that he had enlisted in the Canadian air service during the war and won a commission there. He refused to give the name under which he had served on the ground that it might incriminate him to do so. He was undoubtedly at one time a flier, and today he owns a $20,000 jet-black monoplane in which he soars over the Cascade foothills every time a posse goes out to round up a criminal suspect. He is a rich man. How he got his money has been a matter of speculation in and out of King County.

Several years ago he was indicted in Kings County, New York, under the name of John P. Stockman, for fraud in connection with a fake stock sale. He admitted that he was the Stockman wanted, but Governor Martin refused extradition, and eventually the charges were dropped. It is said that he got his start on the Coast as a sidewalk barker for the Painless Parker dentistry chain. Today he still talks, on the air, for Painless Parker, at a salary of $1,000 a week. He is undoubtedly the most colorful public character who has ever blossomed in the state, a Robin Hood who robs the rich to give to the poor, takes his own cut, and makes no bones about it. He pays political debts, and even his political enemies are his friends.

His defeat in the primaries was the most serious blow that liberal and labor groups have lately sustained, for it looked at first as if Stevenson would be able to unite the semi-radical workers of the cities with the back-country elements with which they have been traditionally at war. He was, on the one hand, the Commonwealth Federation's candidate, and at the same time he offered a one-hundred-dollar pension plan to the old folks, tax-free homes, and better electrical-distribution service for farms. He was beaten, however, partly by the farm people, who distrusted his new-fangled Commonwealth affiliation, and partly by the Republicans, who were allowed this year for the first time to vote in the Democratic primaries. Governor Martin, a conservative banker and wheat miller, ran about 40,000 votes ahead of Stevenson. Stevenson is temporarily out of politics, for his term as commissioner ends in January and he cannot be reelected. It is thought, however, that he will cut himself off from the Commonwealth, which at the last moment abandoned him by announcing a sticker ticket of its own for November. He will keep some of the Commonwealth principles, will consolidate his alliance with labor in the person of Dave Beck, Seattle labor czar, and with the machine in the person of Mayor Dore, and will make a determined effort to regain the confidence of his old constituents in the rural districts. He is still the most important man in the state and his political future is perhaps just beginning.

An ally of Stevenson's, Warren G. Magnuson, King County prosecutor, won by a large majority the Democratic race for Zioncheck's seat in Congress. Next to Stevenson Magnuson is Washington's most promising political figure. In the primary he got the Scandinavian vote, the Teamsters' Union vote, and the Commonwealth Federation vote. He himself used to carry ice, and still holds a Teamsters' Union card. He is a small, handsome man, under thirty-five, popular with women. He is a smart politician; he has the right affiliations; and he will probably be noticed in Congress.

Oddly enough, Vic Meyers, the band-leading lieutenant governor, was the most popular candidate in the primaries. He received the greatest number of votes, 100,000, ever given in recent years to a man running for nomination. He made a leisurely campaign, going into remote Indian reservations and playing tom-toms until he discovered that the Indians were not voting, playing the saxophone at Suquamish, sleeping in a bathtub full of warm water. He is well liked because he is lieutenant governor, and therefore never in a tight spot, and because he mastered Roberts's "Rules of Order" and ran capably one of the wildest legislatures in the history of government. He makes no promises, caters to no crowd, simply runs on his name. He was opposed by twenty-five or more candidates, all of whom fell miserably by the wayside.

With the primary showing the Democrats polling three and one-half times the Republican vote, the political tautness of the state is already relaxing. The local wiseacres

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have lost interest in the November election; they are now watching labor. Within the protective shell of the Democratic machine a vital new labor movement is developing. A battle for labor dominance is in the offing, and under a relatively stable, relatively sympathetic political regime it can be fought without fear. Labor for fifteen years or more has been ridden by an inferiority complex; it is only now beginning to measure its own strength. Since the débâcle of the general strike and the smashing of the I.W.W., the working class has felt itself insecure. For lack of anything better, it has accepted as its newspaper the Seattle *Star,* a Scripps League sheet supporting Landon for President. Regarding them as the least of possible evils, it has given its political support to a set of scoundrelly Democrats. Its one sincere political friend was Zioncheck, still idolized by the Seattle masses, which to this day believe that his final, tragic insanity was a myth created by the capitalist press.

The union leadership has been far from disinterested. Dave Beck has been used by the capitalists as a bogy man to frighten voters, but like the Democratic machine men with whom he is privately friendly, Beck will usually play ball. He has been denounced by the capitalists as a racketeer, and his attitudes, income, and appurtenances do not altogether belie the charge. Last year he paid taxes on an income of $39,000. Of this, he got $12,000 as the vice-president of the Teamsters' Union and their local international organizer, $5,700 as president of the local Teamsters' affiliates; the rest he attributes to some highly profitable "brewing interests." He owns several armored cars and rides about in them, guarded. Though he controls but 3 per cent of the Seattle Central Labor Council, his prestige and influence have been enormous. He has had a hand in the conduct and settlement of virtually every important strike in Seattle in recent years. Within the last few months, however, his hold on labor has been weakening. As he has grown increasingly conservative and therefore increasingly unreliable, a group of liberal unions—the Maritime Federation, the Metal Trades Council, the Printing Trades Council—and the rank-and-file of his own teamsters have begun to chafe under his dominance. Since the radical Maritime Federation is numerically far and away the most powerful unit in the Central Labor Council, and since the weaker unions look more and more to this solid, enlightened group for guidance, it seems certain that Dave Beck and all the old-line leadership must eventually go. If Seattle is to have another labor czar he will be a rank-and-file leader, a new Harry Bridges.

How the Democratic politicians will react to this shift in the labor movement is a question. There are indications that Stevenson stands ready to throw in his lot with the rank and file. Labor, however, has already commenced to take a different attitude toward the time-servers in office. The *P.-I.* strike has demonstrated to labor its own strength. Through years of sell-outs, the working class has learned to distrust the politicians; during the next four years it must learn to exact service from them or reject them.

The Future of Social Security

BY ABRAHAM EPSTEIN

II

THE illusions of the Social Security Act are due to the fact that its sponsors confused social insurance with private insurance. The enacted provisions totally disregard the world-wide experience with social insurance. Although social insurance is employed by practically all industrial countries—whether capitalist, communist, fascist, monarchic, or democratic—its essential aims remain a mystery in the United States to this day. Without bothering to find out what it was about, American business leaders for years maligned every program of social insurance. Even our universities displayed no interest in the subject. Old-age insurance was hardly discussed in this country. Outside of an inadequate study by the writer in 1926, no investigation was ever made and not a single significant article was published on the subject prior to the formulation of the present program by the Committee on Economic Security. The voluminous literature on unemployment insurance is still chaotic. The simple aim of unemployment insurance—to protect unemployed workers—continues to be confused with industrial stabilization and with diverse panaceas and cure-alls for the total abolition of unemployment.

The framers of the Social Security Act found it difficult to cope with the prevailing confusion. President Roosevelt intrusted the elaboration of the program to a committee composed of the busiest members of his Cabinet. Only one of the experts, with the committee but a short time, was identified with social insurance. In the few months given them the galaxy of economists and governmental administrators could not be expected to grasp the fundamentals of such a complex subject.

The act was based on the principles of private insurance because to this day there has been in the United States no understanding of the fundamental differences between the social-insurance device for meeting collective social problems and the scheme of private insurance to meet individual problems. Social insurance seeks not only the widest distribution of the risk but the widest distribution of the costs in order to extend its protective possibilities. Unlike private insurance, which seeks to compensate a single person for a single risk, social insurance aims at the collective protection of workers against economic hazards. For this reason it does not matter in social insurance whether the persons bearing the risk pay the contributions themselves; what matters is that those who suffer most

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should receive the greatest protection. A social-insurance fund is solvent even if part or all of its funds come from general taxation. The emphasis here is on protection rather than on the possibilites of the actuarial premiums. Whereas in private insurance, where all funds come solely from premiums, the benefits must be determined by the premiums, the benefits in social insurance are weighted by governmental social policy rather than by the calculations of the actuary.

Because social insurance seeks social protection, it endeavors to establish a degree of economic balance in the national economy by preventing mass purchasing power from falling below a set minimum base. This is achieved by guaranteeing an income to those who, through no fault of their own, cannot earn it, by means of governmental financial help derived from progressive taxation. The purchasing power of the masses is augmented by a more equitable distribution of the national income. In order to meet the immediate problem of destitution, the government must finance these programs to the extent of its ability. Such programs are considered "social insurance" and not relief whenever the law guarantees the allowances and assures their payment. The stricter mechanism familiar to private insurance is used only to the extent that the government can relieve itself of its future burden without endangering the economic structure.

This concept of social insurance is no longer a matter of theory. It is the only form which has proved successful abroad. Even under a limited program of this nature Great Britain is emerging from the depression on a sounder basis than any other country. The British index of unemployment throughout the prolonged depression never declined halfway to the level reached in the United States. Industrial production for the home market was hardly affected because workers' purchasing power was buttressed by social-insurance income. The number of unemployed has been reduced by more than one-third during the past three years. Wages were maintained at a practically even level throughout the years of depression, while the cost-of-living index declined considerably, thus definitely raising the standard of British workers.

No such conception of social insurance prevails in the United States. The social phase of social insurance is disregarded here. The role of progressive taxation for social security is not comprehended. Thinking only in terms of private insurance and the building of reserves in good times for rainy days, Americans insist that "industry must pay for the ills it causes" and that workers must secure protection only through their own and their employers' contributions. This complete misconception accounts for the inequities and lack of realism of the Social Security Act. The Cabinet committee itself in its report to the President said that "a program of economic security for the nation that does not include those now unemployed cannot possibly be complete." But instead of facing the issue squarely by meeting this problem with governmental aid through the social-insurance program, the committee merely left the entire army of the present unemployed to the mercies of Mr. Hopkins's variegated experimentation. The same fallacious reasoning accounts for the act's ignoring of the problem of the unemployed subsequent to the short benefit period and for its perilous old-age insurance system.

However, the Social Security Act is already on the statute books. Its passage commits the United States to governmental action. The desirability and necessity of social security are recognized. The act does establish federal responsibility for social welfare even though the government largely evades its financial responsibility. But the envisioned objectives cannot be achieved by illusory methods. The deficiencies of the act must be eliminated so that the United States, like other industrial nations, may profit from a constructive social-insurance program.

Fortunately, the mistakes embodied in the old-age-insurance plan can be easily repaired. No part of this plan comes into operation before 1937. Annuities are not to be paid before 1942, and the immediate taxes are set on a small scale. Congress can still correct the errors, and if the Supreme Court sustains this national plan, a genuine achievement in social progress will be attained.

A summary of the deficiencies of the plan indicates the necessary remedies. The defects of the annuity plan arise from the New Deal attempt, contrary to all experience, to establish a self-sustaining fund in the shortest possible time in order to escape governmental responsibility for a generation of aged not previously provided for. It is this ambition which fosters the high premium rates, the huge reserves with their inherent dangers, and the inadequacy of the annuities. But the government cannot recklessly shift to the younger workers the community's responsibility for the older groups, who even with their employers are unable to make sufficient contributions for an adequate annuity at sixty-five. The government must provide for these groups either through an adequate non-contributory pension system or by adding sufficient sums to the insurance annuities to assure a decent competence. To do this, the act must be changed along the following lines:

1. The contribution rates should be reduced from the ultimate 6 per cent of wages reached in the next twelve years to an ultimate maximum of 3 or 4 per cent of wages by both employers and employees, to be attained in the next twenty or thirty years. This will eliminate the dangers of overburdening industry and accumulating large reserves. The present pay-roll tax of 1 per cent can be retained. The increase in the rates should be made to occur, however, every five years, as suggested by the President's Committee on Economic Security, or preferably every ten years as in England. The exact figures can be determined actuarially on the basis of sound social policy.

2. To provide for persons who will reach sixty-five in the next ten to fifteen years, before substantial annuities can be built up, the government may limit itself to grants-in-aid to all needy aged. The present federal pension subsidy should be increased, adequate standards for the states set up, and residence qualifications reduced to meet the problem of migratory workers. The government may further help during this intermediate period by returning part or all of their contributions to those who have been in the insurance system for at least five years. If these

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sums are not considered part of the assets of applicants for non-contributory pensions, a larger income is assured to those who made contributions.

3. The government may follow the British system by granting adequate flat annuities of, say, $40 a month in 1942 or sooner to every insured person and his wife without a means test. The deficit incurred because of grants to those who have not financed their own annuities would be made up by the government from current progressive taxation, as is done in Britain. The contributions may be set in such a manner that only those joining the fund at the age of twenty or twenty-five will accumulate, by their own and their employers' contributions, an adequate competence. This governmental contribution, gradually reduced, may perhaps be eliminated in half a century.

Greater difficulty is met in attempting to remedy the present unemployment-insurance plan, since this part of the act is already functioning and any changes in the federal act have to be incorporated in the fifteen laws already enacted. The need for change, however, is even more urgent here. The necessary amendments are also apparent from the plan's flaws, which are due to the fact that the federal government attempts to avoid its responsibility to the unemployed in the future through the insurance system, even though for the past several years it has been spending and must continue to spend billions of dollars in expensive and ineffective relief. The necessary changes in this part of the act can be made by facing the problem realistically. They are as follows:

1. A national system of unemployment insurance may create great constitutional and administrative difficulties. The enactment and administration of unemployment-insurance laws may therefore be left to the states. A truly effective stimulus for states to enact such laws must be provided, however. This can best be accomplished by granting to the states federal subsidies covering the full cost of the unemployment benefits, upon condition that definite minimum standards are incorporated in the state laws. A state which enacts an acceptable law would be subsidized to the full amount of the pay-roll tax raised in that state. In addition, whenever these funds prove insufficient for the stipulated benefit period, the federal government would supplement them from progressive taxation. The duplicating tax and pay-roll records would thus be eliminated by the retention of only the one general federal tax on employers, augmented perhaps by a small levy on workers, which is justified on many grounds. Such a plan would not only involve fewer constitutional difficulties but assure an adequate and uniform system of unemployment insurance throughout the country and provide an effective method of meeting the needs of the great majority of unemployed.

2. The benefit period must be extended to at least twenty-six weeks. This is now impossible in most states because, although contributions are uniform in all the states, the percentage of unemployment varies sharply from state to state. Only contributions by the federal government can level out the differences. This wider program would not entail much additional cost to the federal government since there would be a corresponding reduction in our present expenditures on WPA and PWA.

3. The revised plan must, as in Great Britain, also provide for supplementary benefits, at least to those in need, after the stipulated regular benefit period. Unemployment relief must be integrated with unemployment insurance, and our whole relief system must be recast. The problem of unemployment cannot be attacked on an emergency basis. Only incorrigible optimists believe that the return of prosperity will abolish the need for further unemployment relief. The question of relief for the unemployed is a national problem which cannot be relegated to the individual states. It is impossible to provide constructive work-relief for all the millions of unemployed for many years to come. Constructive public works can take care of a certain portion of the unemployed. On these normal wages should be paid. Useless work represents pure waste of public funds. The present WPA is not only doing incalculable harm to American wage scales but in turning its workers over to regular governmental departments is helping to conceal the costs of public administration. The claims of psychological benefits to workers on work-relief are grossly exaggerated. Handling a shovel does not add to the dignity of a skilled worker.

When granted on a dignified and assured basis, adequate direct relief is not degrading. It is its present uncertainty and the stigma attached to it which embitter the recipients. That public schools are supported by taxpayers as a whole does not make people hesitate to send their children to them. When unemployment is of short duration systematic relief is not harmful, since the worker feels on a vacation. For those who are unemployed for a long period more vitalizing programs than made work are essential for morale. Under any conditions, work-relief is extremely expensive, and for a given cost many more unemployed could be sustained on dignified relief. It is the high cost of work-relief which causes the federal government to consign millions of unemployed to the states for whatever insufficient help they can render. Direct unemployment relief could be made dignified and certain through a comprehensive system of public employment exchanges where the unemployed would register for work and employers would be encouraged to register their vacancies. The genuinely unemployed would be entitled to certain relief merely by evidencing their willingness to work; the slackers would be effectively eliminated. This system would also make possible the acceptance of temporary jobs, now shunned by persons on relief because of the difficulty of getting back on the relief rolls.

Despite its glittering title the Social Security Act does not establish security. Its most important provisions are pregnant with grave dangers. Since the American people are definitely committed to social security, political or personal considerations must not be permitted to thwart their urgent needs and desires. The good already won must not be lost. A constructive plan of social insurance can provide a measure of security for the workers of America. To delay the necessary corrective action is to court disaster and shatter the hopes of a long-suffering people.

[*Part I of Mr. Epstein's article appeared last week.*]

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Danzig Under the Terror

BY HENRY C. WOLFE

EVENTS in the so-called Free City of Danzig appear to be moving toward a climax. Violent Nazi persecution of the helpless opposition proceeds in the guise of a crusade against bolshevism. The League of Nations "promotes" its Commissioner in Danzig to a post in Geneva, thereby removing the one man from the outside who has courageously opposed the march of Hitlerism into the Free City. The League Council, recognizing the crisis, invites Poland "to seek means for putting an end to the obstruction offered by the Danzig government to the High Commissioner," and to report at the Council's January meeting. Geneva's sudden occupation with the Danzig problem, though encouraging, may have come too late.

Danzig's position as an independent state is based on Articles 100-108 of the Treaty of Versailles and on the Danzig-Polish agreements. The original plan was to provide Poland with an outlet to the sea. The mouth of the Vistula was to be neutral territory. Were Danzig to become part of the Reich, it would have practically no economic hinterland and would rapidly sink to the economic status of Stettin or Lubeck.

But it is not the economic welfare of the Free City that interests the Nazis. They are consumed with the desire to destroy the hated democratic opposition and remove the constant threat to Hitler's prestige that will continue as long as the city is nominally independent. In spite of a violent drive directed and financed from Berlin, the Nazis polled barely 59 per cent of the vote in the election last year. The opposition maintains that a free plebiscite would show the Nazis to be a minority in Danzig. Such a showing would have a devastating effect on National Socialist prestige throughout Europe. At all costs Hitler must prevent such a development. The surest method is to smash the opposition.

On the evening of June 12 a group of German Nationalists—conservative members of the opposition—were holding a meeting in the St. Joseph Haus, a Catholic restaurant. Hundreds of Nazi storm troopers suddenly appeared on the scene, and a riot ensued in which several persons were killed. Two days later Hitler's personal representative, Herr Forster, made the statement that within three weeks the opposition parties would be suppressed.

The Poles were suddenly alarmed. The aftermath of that Nazi riot was an invitation sent from Warsaw to Paris for General Gamelin, French Chief of Staff, to visit the Polish military leader, General Rydz-Smigly, in August. The first week of September found Rydz-Smigly in France, visiting officials, watching military maneuvers, strengthening the Franco-Polish alliance, and arranging for a French credit for Polish purchase of armaments. This undoubtedly came as a shock to Berlin, just as it came as a surprise to other capitals. To counteract the effects of the diplomatic defeat, Hitler whipped up the Communist scare at the Nürnberg congress.

Unhappily Poland's rebuke to Germany does not solve the problems of the Danzig opposition. Nothing less than energetic action by the League and Poland can check the Nazi terror which grips the Free City. That the Nazis have little respect for Geneva was demonstrated by Herr Greiser's sensational gesture at a League session last July. Consequently, Sean Lester of Ireland, the League's Commissioner in Danzig, has held one of the most discouraging jobs in the world. Not only has he had to put up with continual Nazi abuse, but the utter lack of power to enforce his decisions has made his position at once futile and anomalous. A strong stand by the League might protect Danzig's citizens from the Nazi terror. If the League powers mean business, they can count on Polish support, because Warsaw is now thoroughly awake to the danger of Nazi aggression. The Poles realize that if the Reich seizes Danzig, Berlin's next move will be against Pomorze (the Corridor).

In the meantime Nazi pressure against the opposition continues. Citizens are taken into "protective custody," which means that they disappear into a Nazi jail. Freedom of the press has ceased to exist in Danzig. No publication can legally appear that criticizes National Socialism. On the other hand, the Free City is flooded with propaganda from the Reich; the notorious Julius Streicher's anti-Semitic *Stürmer* is pushed for sale by the Nazis, and one sees its slogan, "Die Juden sind Unser Unglück," posted on houses and windows everywhere in Danzig. During August an anti-Jewish boycott was started with the blessing of the Free City's Supreme Court. Danzig's Jewish citizens had protested against a poster displayed in the municipal health-insurance office urging people not to patronize Jewish merchants. The court, which is dominated by the Nazis, rejected the protest on the surprising ground that the boycott is part of the National Socialist Party's anti-Semitic program.

The hopelessness of the opposition's cause is recognized nowhere more clearly than in Danzig itself. One can but marvel at the moral courage of men who continue the struggle against such odds. They know only too well that a sudden shift of the European political winds could place them at the mercy of their Nazi enemies. They know that Berlin hopes Poland will become so engrossed in a quarrel with Czecho-Slovakia or in internal problems that Warsaw will have to turn its back on Danzig. They know they are opposing a ruthless dictatorship and the most powerful military machine in the world. Yet they carry on. As Lord Robert Cecil said not long ago, the Danzig situation is a "symptom of war."

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A Farmer Candidate

BY JAMES RORTY

ON THE platform George Nelson, Socialist candidate for Vice-President in this election, took a hitch in his pants, adjusted his steel-rimmed spectacles, peered a little apprehensively at his metropolitan audience, and began: "Brothers and Sisters."

That's the way the radical farmers do it in the dairy states, just before they stop a foreclosure or regretfully spill some milk, and that's the way Nelson does it, no matter what audience he is talking to. The Socialist Throttlebottom is no actor—he can only be himself. But, in the language of Broadway, the performance is a wow. Seldom has the American electorate been treated to a performance of such simple, earnest, grass-roots authenticity. He has been a surprise even to his party coworkers. Appearing on the same platform with Norman Thomas, one of the most experienced and accomplished orators in American public life, Nelson has come close to stealing the show more than once—much to his own embarrassment.

The worn phrases of Karl Marx come suddenly to life again when uttered by this Wisconsin farmer with the big hands and feet, the tall, lean-muscled body toughened by a half-century of hard manual work, and the soft, patient voice, burred with a strong Danish accent. He "gentles" his audiences the way he would soothe a fractious colt, and then tells them, quite uncompromisingly and a little sadly, all that he thinks and believes about the problems of the American farmer and of the nation as a whole.

Nelson was born in the panic year of '73 in a log shack built in the clearing his father, a Danish immigrant, had hacked out of the virgin hardwood forest, using an ax he made himself in a Chicago machine-shop. That ax, a gun, a hoe, a cookstove, and four chairs constituted the total assets of this pioneer family when they settled in Polk County in 1869. It was seven years after that before they had even a plow or a horse to drag it. Meanwhile they scratched the soil around the stumps, fished, hunted, and befriended their few neighbors—the Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Irish, and Germans who were fighting the forest with equally primitive tools and laying the foundations of the future state of Wisconsin.

Hard necessity made mutual help the first law of the frontier. But to this necessity were joined the cultural patterns which these Scandinavian pioneers brought from the motherland. Before Nelson's father left Denmark, the folk schools were already laying the foundations of the Danish cooperative system. Hence it was natural that the Nelsons—there were seven children in the family—should take a leading part in the establishment of Polk County's first cooperative. It consisted of a log cabin in West Denmark and a home-made churn. For paid employees there were a woman butter-maker and a man to collect the cream.

Beside butter, the Polk County pioneers had one other cash crop, without which they could scarcely have survived. It was children. Almost as soon as he was big enough to wield a pitchfork, Nelson remembers going south in the harvest season to work in the wheat fields. If the crop was good, the workers got paid. Otherwise not. His father and brother did the same thing, and in the winter they worked in the logging camps; the girls as they grew up worked in the hotels and restaurants of the growing cities. Never in his memory, says Nelson, has Polk County agriculture been really self-supporting. All the pioneer families had to export labor. Always they hoped that times would get better, that as the reward of their heart-breaking labor they would some day be able to stay on the farm and get a living out of the soil. The storekeeper, they noticed, made a go of it; his standard of living rose much faster than theirs. Something was wrong. Would consumer cooperation cure it?

"No," says Nelson, himself a devout cooperator and one of the leaders of the cooperative movement in the Lake States. "A cooperative movement built alongside of and within the capitalist system is not enough. What's the sense of being cooperators 364 days of the year, and then, on the 365th day, going to the polls and voting, as Democrats or Republicans, for the fellows that skin us? Cooperation is a good crutch to limp with, but we'll never be able to stand on our two feet until the farmers and workers cooperatize the whole system and build socialism. That's what cooperation means if you think it through."

How soon that will be Nelson doesn't know. He is a patient man, and takes the arduous labor of the campaign as just another of the tough chores he has been doing all his life. In his teens and twenties he worked all over the Middle West and West—in the coal and silver mines of Nevada, in the logging camps and lumber mills, even for a period of three years as a placer miner in the Yukon. From that adventure he returned with just enough dust and nuggets to add another block of cutover land to his paternal inheritance of eighty acres and build a house for his bride. Today he has 140 acres of tilled land, 240 acres of pasture, an uncomfortably large mortgage at the bank, and eight children. He isn't a subsistence farmer any more. On paper, at least, he is a substantial landed proprietor. Yet he and his children are in some respects less secure and less hopeful than were his pioneer father and mother when they were so deep in the woods they never heard of the panic of '73.

Nelson has been a cooperator as long as he can remember, and in the early nineties he helped to form the first local of the Socialist Party in Polk County. He has always been a little ahead of his people, yet always close enough to deserve and receive repeated evidence of their respect and confidence. For nine years he was president of the Wisconsin Society of Equity and editor of its journal. Today, in addition to being the Socialist candidate for Vice-President, he is vice-president of the Farm Holiday Association and a director of the Farmers' Union. He is sixty-three years old, hasn't a gray hair in his head, and is as tough as hickory. For nearly half a century he has been a working farmer, a working cooperator, and a working Socialist.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

VISITING the other day in the office of one of the leading Connecticut newspapers I found an amazing difference of opinion among the editorial staff as to whether the Democrats or Republicans will carry that state. Finally the managing editor told me of the conditions in the office. The business department, he said, including the advertising solicitors, clerks, and so on, is unanimously for Landon. The editorial floor he described as "spotty," with both candidates strongly represented, while the top floor, filled with compositors, was unanimously for Roosevelt. I told him that I thought this portrayed the situation throughout the country in a nutshell. Everywhere business men and those who are possessed of considerable means and are naturally conservative are almost unanimously for the Republican candidate. They are not impressed by Mr. Landon and they admit that his speeches are "terrible"; I have yet to hear a word of enthusiasm about him from any Republican. But that makes no difference. They would be voting for William Randolph Hearst if the Republicans had chosen him as their standard bearer. The sentiment among the business men in a large Connecticut city with which I am familiar is such that there is very little exaggeration in the statement made to me by a friend that anybody in that circle who declared that he was going to vote for Roosevelt was considered a fit subject for a commission of inquiry into his sanity. There never was greater unanimity among the heads of corporations, vice-presidents, and general managers, and it extends down even to small independent business men, who sincerely believe that the corporation-surplus tax will mean the end of their businesses within two years.

But on the other hand there is an extraordinary unity of opinion among the workers both in and out of the labor unions. Correspondents who have traveled with the President in this campaign and who traveled with him four years ago are unanimous in saying that the greetings given to the President in the mining areas of West Virginia and Pennsylvania go farther than any they have ever witnessed in enthusiasm and apparently genuine personal devotion. The workers have come to feel that he is their champion, their friend, and that the New Deal, whatever its faults, was meant to help them as no other Administration has ever sought to help them. In this sense we are witnessing the most clear-cut class struggle in our history. The top and the bottom will be solidly arrayed against each other, and as I see it, the only question is whether the middle class will favor Landon in sufficient numbers to outvote labor—that is, if labor stands firm until Election Day. When I remember how labor went back on La Follette in the 1924 campaign and how the New York City organization flopped from La Follette to the Republicans in the last week of the struggle, I confess to having some anxiety as to whether the labor leaders will stand fast until the end of the campaign. I do not believe that the miners and the mass of the workers who turn out for Roosevelt wherever he appears, often without the slightest instigation by the party organization, can be won away from the President, but unfortunately labor leaders can be bought and have been bought, and there can be no question that the Republicans will stop at nothing in spending the $8,000,000 they plan to disburse.

There is also great danger that as usual the Republican employers will stop at nothing to try to frighten or dragoon their workers into voting against Roosevelt. Before me lies a copy of the house organ of a large Connecticut corporation containing pictures of Nazi girls being regimented and drilled and of the fascist pawns of Mussolini being marched about by their officers. Then there is a picture of care-free and happy American men walking along in an irregular group, all smiles and good cheer. The text declares that this election is going to decide whether Americans will be similarly regimented or remain free and happy citizens. It leaves no doubt about where the management stands. This is pretty shortsighted business, because it is going to make any intelligent workman resent the effort to tell him how to vote. And it is not likely that the attempt to win the election by terror will stop at this sort of thing. It never has stopped there in the past. There have been times when the state of Wisconsin has been covered with billboards assuring the voters that if the La Follette ticket should win, the state's factories would fold up or move away. The full-dinner-pail argument which won at least two elections for the Republicans can hardly be worked this year when it is Roosevelt who is filling the dinner pails in larger and larger degree. But we must be prepared in the closing days of the campaign for even more hysterical charges than we have yet had that we are being sold out to the bolsheviks and that the fate of the American Republic is at stake. If we come to Election Day without some sort of Zinoviev letter, of the type that the Conservatives forged to unseat Ramsay MacDonald's Labor Government in England, we shall be lucky.

Fortunately elections are over soon, and whichever side wins we are not yet facing a genuine class struggle. Whether the lines will be more sharply drawn four years from now if a strong Farmer-Labor Party is put in the field remains to be seen. But if the masters of privilege and property find that even with Mr. Roosevelt reelected the Republic survives and their dividends continue, they will again begin to divide along the old party lines.

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BROUN'S PAGE

Gardenia Bill

"PRETEND to be talking very earnestly," said the older reporter, "or it's a cinch he'll sit down and give us a chapter from his unwritten autobiography."

"Who will?" said Tom Sykes.

"That old bore heading in this direction from the free-lunch counter. Name's Broun. He says he used to be a newspaperman. That was back in 1936 and so nobody around here can remember."

The advice had come too late. The old gentleman had found the empty chair and plopped into it. "Hate to drink alone or talk alone," he said. "Blake's isn't what it used to be thirty years ago. People stayed up then and listened to conversation."

"Like what?" asked the older reporter.

"You may well ask," said the old gentleman. "We will not hear their like again—Swope and Woollcott and Quentin Reynolds. In those days it was just one gag after another. You think I talk a good deal."

"I think you talk too much if you're asking an honest opinion," replied the older reporter, whose name was Sam McHenry.

"Well," said the old gentleman, not in the least abashed, "thirty years ago they called me Silent Broun or sometimes Humble Heywood. 'I guess Roy Howard's got your tongue,' they used to say down at the office. Would you like to hear how I cured myself of being so reticent?"

"Not particularly," said Sam McHenry.

"He must have his joke," the old gentleman continued, turning to the less rebellious of the two victims. "I cured myself by finding two attentive listeners just before going to bed every night and telling them one of my famous stories."

"Have a heart, Pop," exclaimed McHenry, "I still have a Sunday theater piece to do tonight."

"Good, you can use this story about Gardenia Bill. I don't even want any credit. Did you ever hear of a musical show called 'Shoot the Works' which was produced before you were born?"

Both young men confessed complete ignorance.

"I guess," said the old man, "it wouldn't have made very much difference if you had been born. Nobody heard about the show anyway. I was in it myself. It didn't run long. I lost $14,000 and met my wife, but I wouldn't call the whole thing disastrous.

"We had a man who could sing. His first name was Bill. The last could have been O'Connor but it escapes me. He sang something about 'Hot moonlight! Hypnotic moonlight!' I used to know it all. Quite a voice! Quite a voice! But at the end of a couple of weeks he came to me and said he was going to quit. You see it was a cooperative show. Whatever money came in we divided up, and if there wasn't any we divided that up, too. The first week Bill got three or four hundred dollars. That wasn't so bad, but the next week a certain number of people had seen the show and were telling others about it, so nobody very much came. Bill only got $75 that week.

"He had a right to resign but there was no way to pay him any more money or get anybody in his place, and so I went home and thought very seriously and finally I called in my secretary and said, 'Send four gardenias to the theater tonight to Bill and inclose some sort of romantic note.' 'Like what?' said my secretary, who wasn't romantic. 'Oh, tell him that you come every night to "Shoot the Works" just to hear him sing.'

"Thirty years ago actors were susceptible to flattery. At least Bill was. When I came into the theater, he was showing everybody the flowers and the note. 'I think I recognize her,' he said. 'She's a tall, blonde girl and she sits every night in the tenth row.' I hadn't told anybody where the gardenias came from but they laughed at Bill just the same. All of us in the troupe knew that it was most unlikely that anybody should be sitting in the tenth row. It had been days and days since the audience ran back of the fifth row. Still it was possible for us to stagger along in our cooperative way if only we could continue to hold Bill in the cast.

"Saturday was the time he had announced for quitting, and so on Friday I urged my secretary to outdo herself in the fervency of the note which she placed with the flowers. Unfortunately she was not up to the task. I had to write that mash missive myself. I remember I burned it with the end of my cigar to indicate a truly flaming passion.

"Before the curtain went up, Bill came around to the star's dressing-room which I occupied with four other performers. 'Forget about my notice,' he said. 'Money isn't everything. I'm having a good time. I'm going to stick along. The show must go on and all the rest of that bally rot.' "

"That's shorter than most your stories," said Sam McHenry grudgingly.

"And that's because I'm not finished yet. I sent the gardenias again on Monday. I wanted to make sure and I told my secretary to inclose a farewell note. 'We can't afford to be sending these flowers,' I said. 'They cost us $3 every night. Say in your note this time that you've got to go away on a brief vacation and that you hope he'll still be there when you get back.'

"Bill remained with us during the entire eleven weeks. He was quite happy and contented. He was waiting for the girl of the gardenias to come back."

"And so the joke was on him," said Tom Sykes.

"Well, not exactly. You see she told him about the trick I was playing. She thought it was mean and so did he, and so they got married. Still, she wasn't a very good secretary."

HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

SCHOLARSHIP BY PROXY

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

I HAVE on my desk a series of four mimeographed sheets containing a list of some two hundred American actresses of the past and present. The remainder of each page is occupied by five parallel columns headed "Rank as an Actress," "Popular Appeal," "Beneficial Influence on Theatrical and Dramatic Standards," and so on; and accompanying the whole is a letter from a professor in an Eastern university asking me please to "rank the names under each heading from 1 to 3, using 3 to indicate greatest importance."

If I were to write the "scholar" who makes the request that I shall certainly do nothing of the kind, that my offhand opinion on the subject is of no conceivable value, and that a compilation of a thousand such offhand opinions will be worth not one iota more, he would probably set me down as a nasty, uncooperative curmudgeon. Hence I shall not even bother to write the letter, but it is high time that American universities should halt not only the mania for senseless questionnaires but the whole tendency to permit both professors and so-called "research students" to ask other people to do their work for them. The abuse of the questionnaire has been discussed rather frequently, but no one, so far as I am aware, has publicly protested to the universities themselves against the nuisance and the folly of the lazy student who is apparently permitted to believe that when he has collected five hundred random opinions signed by five hundred miscellaneous "names" he has made a contribution to knowledge and become a scholar worthy to be dignified by a sheepskin which proclaims him Doctor of Philosophy—of all things!

So far as I know, none of the older and more distinguished universities has yet fallen so low, but there is no one in even the humblest of public positions who does not almost weekly receive fantastic requests which betray not only the most debased possible conception of the meaning of research but a plain cheek which it is difficult to comprehend. Very recently, to take a typical example, I was visited by a so-called student from a New York institution of higher learning who asked me, with poised notebook, "my relation to contemporary literature," and then, after I had mumbled something or other, informed me with considerable enthusiasm that a collection of such opinions was to constitute his "thesis," that it would be nice if I would sign his notes, and that perhaps when the collection was complete *The Nation* would like to buy it for publication. Not very long before, I had received from a Ph.D. candidate in a Middle Western university a request for a list of the most significant modern plays of all countries, accompanied by the charming admission that as he was writing a thesis on the subject, he would like to be told which works it would be most worth his while to read.

I was, I am proud to boast, less appalled by the calm effrontery of the demand, and the apparent assumption that I would be only too glad to spend a few weeks compiling such a list, than I was by the naivete of the mind which could take it for granted that the proper way to investigate the significance of the modern drama was to read only the plays which someone else had decided to be significant. But what is to be expected of students when their professors can write such letters as that which I received a few weeks ago from one of them, which ran as follows?

> I have just returned from a five weeks' stay in the Soviet Union, making a study of the press. In the course of things the editor of the monthly *Literary Critic* asked me to prepare an article on the influence of Maxim Gorki on American writers.
>
> As I know next to nothing about it, I am asking American writers themselves if they have felt this influence, in themselves or in others, and what it has been or may be.
>
> I hope that my approaching you for a few lines on this subject may not be a nuisance, and I think it would be well to add that I am not accepting payment for the job.

Each of these correspondents I answered with a polite note. I see little to be gained by private rudeness even in response to gall of such quintessential strength, but some useful purpose might possibly, I think, be served by asking my correspondents, and more especially the institutions by which they are sponsored, a few simple questions. Precisely what abilities are being demonstrated and what training is being received by the New York student who is popping in and out of offices and studies asking a very miscellaneous group of journalists and writers "their relation to contemporary literature"? What kind of original scholarship is likely to be produced by a student who gets his working bibliography at second hand from a dramatic critic who dashes off a list of plays? And, finally, what business has a college professor to agree to write an article on a subject which, he is ready to admit, he knows "next to nothing about"?

At various times the research conducted in American graduate schools has come in for a good deal of criticism —some of it justified and some of it not. Along with a good deal that is mediocre the accumulated doctoral dissertations issued by Harvard, Columbia, Yale, and some of the lesser institutions include quite a few works of substantial merit and quite a few more which represent sound honest work in the investigation of topics which may be of no particular intrinsic importance but which have served, nevertheless, both to demonstrate the ability of the student

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and to afford him some training in the methods of research. It is also true that certain purely statistical studies would not be possible without the use of the questionnaire. It is sometimes necessary to count heads, and there are occasions when the count itself is significant. But a compilation of opinions remains merely a compilation of opinions. Scholarship consists in special knowledge, not in the cumulation of ignorances, and there is no possible justification for the sort of thing I have been describing. It is far worse than any of the various varieties of Alexandrianism which tend to infect institutions of learning. It is dishonest, it is ungentlemanly, and worst of all it is plain silly.

BOOKS

Young Man in War Time

SHERSTON'S PROGRESS. By Siegfried Sassoon. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

MR. SASSOON continues here, and possibly concludes, his largely autobiographical chronicle of George Sherston. For those who have read the "Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man" and the "Memoirs of an Infantry Officer" this book may prove a valuable extension of earlier experiences; for those who, like myself, have not, it must come as a very great disappointment. Its shortcomings are scarcely atoned for by its undeniable honesty, and scarcely annulled because the story has a certain interest it was never intended to have. Quite without meaning to, as it happens, Mr. Sassoon has written a document, almost an exposé, of the eternal Englishman incapable of rising above himself. In Sherston's case there can be no doubt that traditional values won out over an attempted independence of mind.

Second Lieutenant George Sherston went on strike against the war. But his pacifism led him, not before a court-martial, but into a hospital for the "shell-shocked." There a psychiatrist, as clever as he was calm, coupled with plenty of good food and golf, restored Sherston to sanity. He decided finally to return to the front, did so, found the job not too awful, was wounded, and ended up in a rather nobler type of hospital where members of the royal family stopped by his bed to offer forty-five seconds' worth of polite sympathy. At this point the narrative ends, with Sherston as muddled as ever and given to rather vague—and glib—interrogations that may be taken to express his partial dissatisfaction with the universe.

As a transcript of a young man's actual emotions in war time, the book is convincing enough. You must, however, regard the young man as extremely average, with no real self-knowledge and no fixed scale of values. He is anybody who has seen the blood and horror of war, which is a great deal less than we suppose Sherston to have been. Furthermore, seeing that almost twenty years lie between Sherston's experiences and the writing of them down, one looks for a sense of perspective, a revision of values, a growth of understanding that one nowhere encounters. This is what happened to Sherston, and so far as the book is concerned, nothing ever happened afterward.

There is possibly an argument in favor of presenting things simply as they were, of leaving them inclosed within their own time and place, without hindsight, without revaluation; though it is not easy to put it forward here, since the Sherston of today constantly, and pointedly, keeps interjecting himself into the picture. But what is really wrong with the book is the portrait of Sherston as he then was: a man so quickly able to accommodate himself, after one flare of defiance, to prevailing sentiment. It is not that Sherston was either a weak or a cowardly person. It is rather that his rebelliousness was only superimposed on his profoundly English nature. It would be unfair to say that, after coming out against war and all it signified, he traduced his principles; rather he changed his mind, regained the national disease of "seeing things through," saw them through, and ended up pleased that the royal family should stand by his hospital bed and confer its verbal largess. In other words, Sherston rebelled under stress of feeling, then conformed again under stress of feeling; throughout the ordeal he was altogether the victim of his emotions.

This is not enough to create, for me, a provocative book. Set against any of the better narratives of the war by Continental writers, "Sherston's Progress" seems not only confused but confused in an immature and childish way. In Mr. Sassoon's book there is simply no evidence of a thinking mind; there is neither psychological nor philosophical substance. There is only a young man who lets himself in for a bad quarter of an hour and then, not because he lacks courage but because he lacks conviction, falls back into the ranks. His real interests are golf, chasing the fox, reading poetry: is it too cynical to think at times that his real objection to the war is its interfering with these pleasures?

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Still Groping

KIT BRANDON. A PORTRAIT. By Sherwood Anderson. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

MR. ANDERSON'S new heroine is a poor mountain girl of east Tennessee. Well, she grows up there . . . you would have to have lived there yourself, in Tennessee or North Carolina, or maybe only in the mountains of Virginia, to understand just what kind of a hillside farm her father had . . . he was dark, with white, white teeth . . . Mr. Anderson would describe the farm except that there aren't any words in English that would really serve the purpose . . . gullied fields . . . the TVA may change all that . . . and a lot of laurel . . . there would be smoke rising some days from over behind the laurel, and that would be where Kit's father had his still . . . he was darker than her mother, who was so lazy that Kit didn't have much use for her, but this wasn't exactly because her teeth weren't white too, like his . . . teeth, teeth, rows of them in this modern America of ours . . . and maybe more fathers than we know who would try to do to their daughters what Kit's father tried . . . only tried . . . to do to her one evening when they were through working in the fields and were on the way home along down through the brush . . . only tried . . . for Kit was even then beginning to be a woman, and there is a strange thing about women . . . American women, Turkish women, it doesn't matter where or who . . . they may be easy to put something over on but then again they may not . . . sometimes it looks as if they knew what they wanted and when they wanted it . . . there is something in them, Mr. Anderson will tell you, that cannot be corrupted . . . and

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yet these very women we are talking about, we men sitting at our typewriters here in modern, oh, maybe too modern America . . . they can be beasts too, can roll in offal . . . and never be changed a particle . . .

The point is that Kit left the farm right then and there . . . it would have been a hillside farm, and she would have had to walk down, down a long way in her thin dress . . . no shoes, either, but then we are to remember what shoes she was to wear later, when she had married Gordon Halsey . . . Gordon was tight with her himself, but his father left hundreds of dollars with her whenever he made one of those silent visits to the hotel where she sat reading books . . . but now she walked on down until she got to the valleys where the factories are . . . O, South, O, pitiful proud hill people who creep down like this every year to watch the beautiful machines whirring . . . no man can say they aren't beautiful, and certainly you don't, standing there watching the white thread dance . . . but then you creep on in and take your places at the machines, and pretty soon you will have become too much a part of them . . . for the mistake this modern America makes is not realizing that human beings have got to keep some portion of them human after all . . . not a very big portion . . . most of them don't want revolution or anything like that, they want after all very little, just self-respect . . . they don't want to kill . . . but they do want to live . . . like the poor boy who could express his love of horses only by putting on little leather hoofs and being one . . .

The point is that Kit, wanting to live in these years after the war, tried everything . . . tied threads in a cotton mill . . . worked in a shoe factory . . . clerked in a ten-cent store . . . learned how to wear clothes . . . met men . . . and of course here she would have known how to take care of herself . . . which doesn't mean that she didn't sometimes know she wanted to give herself . . . but she kept something back, even after her marriage to Gordon Halsey, the son of the biggest bootlegger in that part, that Southern part, of modern America . . . Gordon Halsey . . . but it was Tom Halsey that counted in her life, after she had got rid of Gordon and drove bootleg cars for Tom all over the United States . . . risking her beautiful head and legs through several winters and summers on all kind of roads . . . modern American roads, there have never been anything like them . . . it was Tom, the silent, powerful pioneer in a new American industry back there in those days after the war, the liquor industry . . . a pioneer somewhat as John Jacob Astor had been long before him, Astor the corrupter of Indians, or a little later the big oil and steel and rail men . . . and then the end of Tom that night there by Kate's house when the government men closed in on him and his own son killed him . . . Kit, though, jumping into one of the government cars and speeding off until she was finally clear of everything and ready to settle down into the less lonely life, the more fruitful life, now at the beginning of which it seems Mr. Anderson has made her acquaintance . . . he having been through all this merely the magazine or newspaperman who got her story and put it in a book . . .

How he tells it is his own business . . . he has written twenty-one books before this one about Kit Brandon . . . and let us not forget Tom Halsey . . . so there is no doubt that he could explain his greater and greater liking year in and year out for a way of writing that is more like the way a baby reaches for something than the way a man writes when he has something to say or maybe a story to tell . . . or then again maybe a person to really and honestly create . . . none of which things has been done in this book of Kit Brandon.

MARK VAN DOREN

The Indispensable Montaigne

THE ESSAYS OF MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE. Translated and Edited by Jacob Zeitlin. Volume III. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

THE third and final volume of Jacob Zeitlin's translation and edition of the Essays of Montaigne has now appeared, and the end crowns the work. Editor, designer, and publisher may congratulate themselves—Professor Zeitlin upon completing a major achievement in American scholarship, Elmer Adler upon clothing it in a noble product of the bookmaker's art, and Mr. Knopf upon doing honor to his own imprint. And every purchaser—there should be many—may congratulate himself upon money well spent.

Zeitlin's translation is smooth and flowing but, unlike its model, the seventeenth-century Cotton, impeccable in its accuracy. It is, however, in his creative editing that Zeitlin outranks, to the best of my knowledge, all of his predecessors, even the French. The text is so arranged that at a glance the reader can distinguish the first edition and its numerous subsequent interpolations, changes, and additions; this is not merely editorial finesse but an essential help in following the career of Montaigne's mind. The notes, many of them miniature discourses, lavish treasures of research and illumination upon the serious reader. Zeitlin has not only ransacked Villey, Armaingaud, and the other leading authorities; but he has retested their research and enlarged upon it. Scarcely a clue is left unpursued or a historical stone unturned; as a result, Montaigne's whole age, so far as it touched his life and work, lies before the student's eyes. No minor help, the index to both the author and his sources is the most complete to date.

Finally, the introduction and prefatory notes—Zeitlin's own essays—rank among the most valuable contributions to the literature on Montaigne. They clarify the logical and chronological order of the great Frenchman's thought; they bring to bear upon it the proper amount of information concerning sources or contemporary influence, so that the reader may better judge what Montaigne meant—and this without lapsing into either pedantry or wind-jamming. And when Zeitlin presents his own views, although they may be occasionally open to dispute, they are something the reader can sink his teeth in.

No lover of Montaigne, no student of his century or of the tradition of liberalism, and no admirer of beautiful books can dispense with these volumes.

MARVIN LOWENTHAL

Let's Call It Fiction

SPAIN IN REVOLT. A HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN IN 1936 AND A STUDY OF ITS SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES. By Harry Gannes and Theodore Repard. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

THERE is a certain school of radical writers who have as little enthusiasm for the stern beauties of fact and as little respect for its dynamics as the textbook writers who teach the mysterious non-sequiturs of elementary-school history—that the American Revolution was caused by dumping tea into Boston Harbor, that the English turned Protestant because Henry VIII wanted another wife, and so on. The radical writers and the textbook historians use a different language and different formulas, but the object in each case is the same. They are both writing, not to reveal, but to conceal.

This is a depressing thing to discover in Harry Gannes,

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international-events columnist on the *Daily Worker,* and his collaborator, Theodore Repard. To be sure, their book, "Spain in Revolt," is not an isolated case of tailoring history to the party line. Simple honesty has long since become a useless—indeed, a dangerous—virtue among many of the writers whom Farrell recently cannonaded with quotations from Marx, as if the difficulty were theoretical. It isn't. It is entirely a question of revolutionary morals.

The Gannes-Repard book on Spain seems to be written to prove that—as Dimitrov says—fascism as an international or national development is to be stopped by a "Popular Front" combination; that is, by governments resting on alliances between workers and petty bourgeois or bourgeois. The idea is that these alliances represent democracy versus fascism, and that in Spain the Popular Front means strength and progress for the workers because the issue in Spain—as everywhere else, we are told—is democracy versus fascism, or versus feudalism, in other words the making of the bourgeois revolution. Messrs. Gannes and Repard must therefore prove that what Spain needs and wants is the bourgeois-democratic pro-capitalist revolution made in America in 1776. To prove that, they have to show that the Spanish middle class is potentially revolutionary, that the land relations are still feudal, that capitalism is undeveloped and would be a progressive force, that the peasants are benighted and divided from the workers, and that the workers themselves have never heard of jumping from republican revolution into proletarian rule, and merely want what Kerensky wanted in Russia in 1917.

Messrs. Gannes and Repard do prove all this, which is to say they assert it and then draw the desired conclusions. That the social and economic facts, the history of this (Second) Spanish Republic, the behavior of the peasants and workers, the appalling timidities and treacheries of the middle-class officials dispute their "Marxist" analysis at every step does not disturb them in the least. Perhaps they are not even aware of it, though even a casual visit to Spain at any time in the last five years might have helped. At least, it would have taught them how to spell the names of the political and labor leaders they refer to so glibly, and they might even have learned what a syndicalist is, which would be useful since at least half Spain's workers belong to that category. Also they should have looked on the map to see how to write some of the names of the provinces.

ANITA BRENNER

Oklahoma Catalogue

CATALOGUE. By George Milburn. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

ONLY in a comparative sense may "Catalogue" be described as a novel: it is longer than any of the stories in "Oklahoma Town" and "No More Trumpets," and it has a more unified theme than either of these collections. But from a positive point of view—its scope of character and its narrative technique—it is actually a composition of short stories, a satirical "Winesburg, Ohio," or a prose "Spoon River Anthology," in which the separate themes are drawn together in a common locale and guided by a master symbol. Quite clearly, this very talented story-teller from the Southwest moves more awkwardly in an expansive medium than in the story form of "A Class in Economics."

Mr. Milburn's Winesburg is Conchartee, Oklahoma (population 2,000); the events which disturb this town for the interlude of the tale are clustered around the fall-and-winter editions of the bulky mail-order catalogues mailed semi-annually—and

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free of charge—by Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward. The characters are developed in terms of the influence which the catalogues exercise over their lives—a treatment which results in two-dimensional figures like those projected on a screen, not deep enough for the tragic effects which Mr. Milburn seeks to create at times but superbly adapted to his talent for farce. For Ira Pirtle, gas prop., the catalogue means rubber collars (33F8244) which are set on fire by his Indian rival for the hand of the Widow Holcombe, whose amour is postponed by the failure of her Hair Magic to arrive from the city; for Red Currie the catalogue means sizzle pants; and for the flapper on whom he has his eye it means the flowered step-ins which lead to his committing a murder with 6F475 Xtra Range Shotgun Shells.

The falsity of the serious theme is apparent in the lynching of Sylvester Merrick, Negro, who is the white man's goat for these catalogue coincidences (he is hanged, incidentally, with his mail-order clothesline): the episodic accumulation is not too thick for comedy, but it cannot be converted successfully into pathos. On the other hand, the sketchy outline of a conflict between Postmaster Shannon and Banker Winston on the question of a new sewerage system for the town as against reduced taxes for the property-holders, though it suggests a genuine clash in real life, is dramatically unconvincing precisely because the catalogue implications which the story has trained us to seek are absent. The emphasis on the relevance of personal experience to a catalogue listing has led inevitably to the drawing up of a human catalogue. The artifice is amusing, but it marks no real stride in Mr. Milburn's development.

SAMUEL SILLEN

Christianity and Revolution

CHRISTIANITY CONFRONTS COMMUNISM. By Matthew Spinka. Harper and Brothers. $2.

CHRISTIAN MATERIALISM. By Francis J. McConnell. Friendship Press. $1.25.

CREATIVE SOCIETY. By John Macmurray. Association Press. $1.50.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION. Edited by John Lewis, Karl Polanyi, and Donald K. Kitchin. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.

THE first of these four books is chaff, the second is a splendid luncheon, the third is a nourishing five-course dinner, and the fourth is a banquet. Dr. Spinka writes as a liberal who has read rather widely on the subject of communism but is essentially unsympathetic toward it and toward the Soviet Union. I doubt that it would be possible to get into print a more inadequate account of the Russian Revolution than he gives us in his first chapter. The next two chapters contain a rather tediously detailed account of what happened to the churches in the revolution. This aspect of the story simply cannot be presented save against the background of the black reaction and hideous superstition of the church under the Czar. And to this background Dr. Spinka pays no attention. He writes almost as if the Russian church deserved sympathetic treatment at the hands of the Communists, and shows hardly a glimmer of appreciation, in these first chapters, of the values in communism. When he comes to his main theme, Christianity Confronts Communism, he constantly contrasts communism with Christianity as it ought to be but nowhere is. And he constantly falls into the error of setting Christianity over against communism, as if we could choose between them. One sentence will perhaps sufficiently reveal his lack of in-

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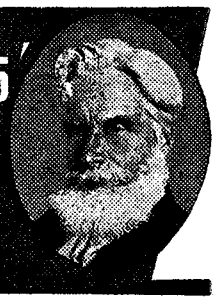

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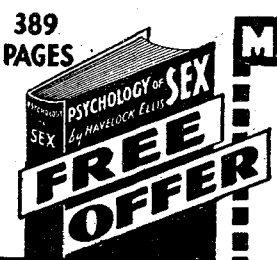

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In the first of two articles, Max Lerner, an editor of *The Nation*, will analyze the position of President Roosevelt with particular reference to his relation to labor. In the second article, Mr. Lerner will discuss the gains, hopes, and chances of Norman Thomas, Earl Browder and other left-wing leaders.

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sight. Referring to the use of force in behalf of the working class he says, "But this does not differ from the moral level of the Czarist regime, which also 'desired the good' of a certain class" (page 186).

Bishop McConnell divides his book of 167 pages into sections on Getting, Spending, and Giving, and writes with the stalwart faith in real Christianity and the absence of illusions in the economic and political realms which we have learned to expect from him. He did not set out to give us a profound essay, but he has achieved a splendid book to put in the hands of Christian laymen. A large part of the section on Giving is devoted to a defense of Christian missions, and I think he has said the best that can be said in behalf of missions. Particularly strong is his plea that people with a sensitive conscience who derive their income from socially hurtful sources or from industries whose practices cannot be ethically defended should devote a large part of their money to "social experimentation." This, he thinks, is for them the solution of their moral dilemma.

You get, I think, to the very heart of Professor Macmurray's book in these sentences:

> Christianity is the source of communism, and communism has moved into dialectical opposition to Christianity through the process by which Christianity in its conscious form has been divorced from material realities. A Christianity which withdrew its beliefs from association with the temporal reality of earthly life must inevitably produce out of itself a temporal theory which divorces itself from the eternal and spiritual reality.

Lest someone assert that in using the words "eternal" and "spiritual" the author retreats to essentially meaningless abstractions, let it be said that he gives us, in the chapter on The Eternal and the Temporal, a most stimulating and original interpretation of the meaning of these two concepts—though, to be sure, a thinker as appreciative of communism as Professor Macmurray has a rather difficult time showing that the eternal and spiritual elements are absent from communism in such a degree as to make a real contrast with Christianity possible. "The defect of communism," he says, "is its neglect of that aspect of life which is grounded in the love-impulses." Contrariwise, the defect of our pseudo-Christianity is that it ignores that aspect of life which is grounded in the hunger-motive. Here it is in one great sentence. "The idealism of pseudo-Christianity consists finally in the divorce between hunger and love, through which love becomes an ideal and hunger is left to control and determine action." The chapter on The Religion of Jesus is so full of insight that I should like to have it reprinted in a pamphlet for distribution among Christians and Communists. No foolish attempt is here to disguise the fact that Jesus's attitude toward the wealthy and powerful was one of suspicion and distrust, while his attitude toward the poor and defenseless was one not only of sympathy but of belief in their God-given destiny to be the agents and inheritors of the new Kingdom of God. "Creative Society" is by all odds the most important book on this general subject, written from the Christian standpoint, which has appeared in some time.

Concerning "Christianity and the Social Revolution" Professor Reinhold Niebuhr has said that it is somewhat embarrassing for him to say what ought to be said about it since he is one of the contributors—the only American contributor among seventeen. Well, this reviewer has no hesitation in saying that he rejoices in the richness and scope of the book. Niebuhr was never more incisive than in his chapter on Christian Politics and Communist Religion. Here one discovers, as in the chapter on Jesus by Conrad Noel, Vicar of Thaxted,

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how it is that a clear thinker can be a conservative Christian in his theology and also a thoroughgoing Marxian. Ivan Levisky writes on Communism and Religion from the point of view of one who fully accepts the orthodox Communist position on religion. But here is no superficial dismissal of religion by one who can claim no real understanding of it. If Christians are to maintain the validity of their religion they will have to understand and meet the arguments of a Levisky. This reviewer has read and talked not a little on fascism. After reading Karl Polanyi on The Essence of Fascism he felt that he had hitherto been playing about on the surface of the matter. Fascism, it is made clear, is basically anti-individualist. That is why it is equally opposed to Christianity and to communism, for both of these systems are basically individualist. Here at last we have the miracle of a symposium without one really weak chapter. HERMAN F. REISSIG

DRAMA

Napoleon—His Life and Liver

MY OWN lack of interest in Napoleon Bonaparte is both wide and deep. Probably even "L'Aiglon" is not really as sickly a play as I have always thought it, and just as there are some to whom the most trivial thing is fascinating if it relates to the Emperor, so to me even intrinsically interesting matters seem to lose their importance if they concern this particular great man. I do not rage and roar; denunciations of the butcher of Europe seem to me as jejune as the panegyrics are uncalled for, and my attitude toward detractors and advocates alike can best be summed up in the immortal words of a now otherwise almost forgotten comedian: "I'd rather not hear any more about it."

Obviously, then, I am the worst possible spectator for a play called "St. Helena" (Lyceum Theater)—especially when that play happens, as this particular one does, to confine itself pretty severely to direct presentation without offering a thesis or pointing a moral. It is, I am informed, rigidly accurate, though a fellow-spectator who obviously does not share my aggressive indifference toward the subject did point out between the acts that some sort of refrigerating machine referred to as actually in use probably never reached St. Helena at all. It is also, apparently, completely dispassionate in its presentation of Napoleon's character, and while allowing him a few words about his philanthropic dream of a united Europe, leaves the spectator to decide for himself how deep or how sincere the motive was. Probably the fact that even I was not always bored means that more normal spectators would find the performance moderately absorbing; and I am certain that those who bring their own initial interest with them will be fascinated. The playing of Maurice Evans is good, the staging is excellent, and here, after all, is the demi-god very much as he doubtless was. Yet the chief impression brought away by one of my kidney is merely that the French prisoners and the English jailors were almost equally childish and that the destiny of Europe was in the hands of very trivial people. Napoleon, it seems, died of a liver complaint brought on by lack of exercise he could not take. The English would not let him ride without an Englishman in attendance, and the Emperor thought it *infra dig.* to canter in such company.

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From Aristotle on, many better men than I have attempted to analyze the differences between drama and history. One of them certainly is that while history can assume that events must be important and interesting merely because they happened, drama must proceed as though the factual and the imaginary were on precisely the same footing and must create for itself the importance and the interest of whatever it presents. By such a criterion "St. Helena" is history. It does not make Napoleon worth a play; it merely assumes that he is.

"White Horse Inn," the new musical spectacle in the vast Center Theater, obviously owes its international success to the existence of an international common denominator rather than to any unique qualities, and is to be described after the manner of the circus press agent rather than in the vocabulary of criticism. It is Stupendous and it is said to have Cost Three Hundred Thousand Dollars to produce. There are yodlers, Bavarian dancers, vast hordes of native figurants, several prop cows, and a few real goats. The whole thing is as bright and bustling as you can imagine, and the fact that, as is usual in such cases, it all adds up to very little will not prevent it from being a great, if not exactly a Broadway, success.

Thanks to continuously overflowing houses the D'Oyly-Carte company has extended its engagement for eight weeks more. "Princess Ida" is now current.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

A FRIEND who had himself played in Chicago jazz bands at one time, and had been very much in that sort of thing but had since drifted out of it, listened one evening with pleasure and discrimination to some of the finest recent records of hot jazz. After these I put on an old record that had been reissued; and now my friend moved his ear up close to the machine, the better to distinguish in the raucous mixture the sound of the cornet he wanted to hear; his face lighted up with recognition and appreciation at various points; and at the end his comment was: "The greatest of them all." The record was "The Jazz Me Blues" by Bix Beiderbecke and other players; and my friend was referring to Beiderbecke.

You will find Beiderbecke spoken of always in similar terms—for example, in Panassié's "Hot Jazz," or in Otis Ferguson's article in the *New Republic* of July 29 last, which even with its inevitable Fergusonisms is a superb example of critical appreciation. And the terms are justified: a phrase from Beiderbecke's cornet is as beautiful as any phrase can be; it is, in its loveliness and perfection, unique, as a phrase should be; and it is ultimately indescribable. Panassié speaks of it as "full and powerful," but also as "so fine as to be almost transparent"; and there is in fact this extraordinary delicacy in strength. He speaks of phrases that soar; and this, too, is in fact a remarkable and distinguishing quality. Ferguson speaks of "the clear line of that music," of "every phrase as fresh and glistening as creation itself"; and there is in fact this radiance, this simple joyousness. These terms tell us a great deal, but there remains much that eludes words completely and can only be heard. And though one can account for the music up to a certain point, as Ferguson does, by the quality of the person—the "candor, force, personal soundness, good humor"—there have been other people with candor, force, personal soundness, and good humor, and one has

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still to explain, as always, how these qualities translated themselves in this instance into such musical phrases.

Beiderbecke can be heard on three groups of records. For one thing, Victor has reissued on 25283 and 25354 recordings by the brilliant band of Jean Goldkette, of which Beiderbecke was a member; and in a Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Album nine recordings by Whiteman's band, which he joined later, two by a recording group under Hoagy Carmichael, and one by a group under Beiderbecke himself. Victor labels them "featuring Bix Beiderbecke"; but the fact is that with the one exception he played merely as an unfeatured member of well-known bands—which means that one hears him sometimes for a full chorus, sometimes merely for a phrase, sometimes only in the background with the rest of the brass. But even the phrase detaches itself from its surroundings as something exquisite and perfect; and even playing along with the others in the background he stands out from them, not through any aggressiveness but solely through the distinctive quality of his style.

In addition, a small group of the best players in Goldkette's band, led by Frank Trumbauer, a fine saxophone player, made records, some of which have now been reissued. On Vocalion 3010 are "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans" and "Clarinet Marmalade"; on Brunswick 7703, "I'm Coming, Virginia" and "Singin' the Blues." These do feature Beiderbecke in extended solos, of which the most beautiful and famous is the one in "Singin' the Blues."

And finally Beiderbecke himself led some of the musicians in recordings, of which these have been reissued: on Vocalion 3042 "The Jazz Me Blues" and "At the Jazz Band Ball"; on Vocalion 3149 "Sorry" and "Since My Best Gal Turned Me Down." In these there is a great deal of collective improvisation, with particularly fine solos by Beiderbecke in the first and third.

Columbia has issued Brahms's Second Symphony in the performance of the London Philharmonic under Beecham (five records, $7.50). The companies are now getting an extraordinary amount of an orchestra's performance into the record; and you have to be sure that your phonograph is able to get all of it out again: some of it can be stopped by the pick-up, or by the amplification system, or by the speaker. And from my experience with this Columbia set I have learned that it can be stopped by the needle. After playing each side with a fresh Columbia half-tone needle I was about to report that the sides had been recorded at varying volume levels; but decided to make tests, and discovered that the variation was in the needles. This is something new in these needles which Columbia ought to look into. But after all my tests I still suspect that the symphony was recorded with a reduced number of violins. Otherwise the performance is excellent.

Half-tone steel needles, incidentally, are what I use and recommend. Cactus needles reduce scratch; but you cannot do this without reducing musical sound of the same frequency; and this loss is the explanation of what people call the greater mellowness produced by cactus needles. It takes metal to bring out everything that is in the record; and with that you have to accept scratch. And among metal needles my recommendation is half-tone steel, a fresh needle for each side. Columbia's product having turned out to be variable, I have been advised by an authority to try H. W. Acton, 370 Seventh Avenue, New York.

B. H. HAGGIN

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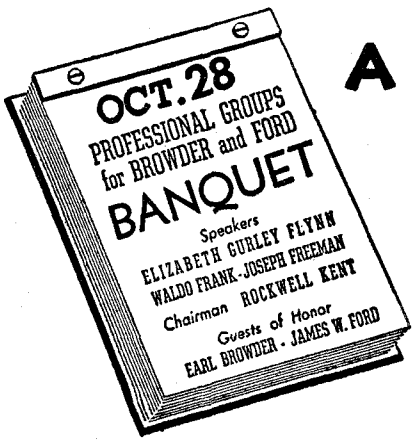

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Letters to the Editors

A Few Remarks About Sibelius

Dear Sirs: B. H. Haggin is another one of those critics who discuss music they've apparently never listened to. When he says that "Lady Be Good" is better than the other Goodman Trio records, he gets away with it only because most of *The Nation's* readers don't know their jazz from a hole in the ground. I'll send Mr. Haggin a pack of cigarettes if he can find any reliable swing fan (such as Otis Ferguson or Benny Goodman) who'll agree with so high-handed a dismissal of Goodman Trio records like "After You've Gone."

But Haggin's preposterous judgments on modern jazz don't matter so much as do his judgments on modern symphonic music. A couple of months ago he said the real point about Sibelius's symphonies "is that his own material in these works often has the character and feeling of folk-music. . . . Sibelius's ability to work this type of material into large-scale structures has deceived commentators into thinking they were hearing large-scale ideas as well, and to claim for him the constructive mastery of Beethoven. But constructive power is evident and important only in relation to the material on which it operates; and Sibelius simply hasn't the ideas with which to achieve the form-of-content that Beethoven achieves." What does Mr. Haggin think about the finale of Beethoven's "Eroica"? That is certainly a large-scale structure, yet both its main and secondary themes have "the character and feeling of folk-music."

When I wrote to Mr. Haggin, asking him for some examples of folk material in Sibelius's mature symphonies (Numbers 4 to 7), he cited the first theme of the Second Symphony. That's typical of Haggin's method of criticism: he takes an early work of Sibelius like the Second Symphony, the Violin Concerto, or "Night Ride and Sunrise," and attacks these immature works with all the courage of a Governor Landon denouncing waste or praising liberty. It's like disposing of Beethoven by finding flaws in his Battle Symphony or his Minuet in G. Never have I seen in Haggin's column any mention of Sibelius's greatest works —"Tapiola" and the Fourth, Sixth, and Seventh symphonies. He even confessed in his letter to me that he had heard the Sixth Symphony only once! One would never guess it from the knowing air with which he dismisses Sibelius's claims to greatness—an air which implies to his unsuspecting readers that he is thoroughly familiar with Sibelius's music and sees through it all.

MORTON SEIDELMAN,
Secretary, The Sibelius Club
Trenton, N. J., September 28

Dear Sirs: What I say about Sibelius proceeds from readings of the scores of all the symphonies, and from repeated hearings of all but the Sixth, which I have heard only once. And not only did I tell this to Mr. Seidelman the first time he raised the question, but after citing examples of folk-like material from the Second Symphony (which I said I considered representative of Sibelius's matured musical thinking) and the Fifth (which Mr. Seidelman included among the mature symphonies), I referred him to places in the score of the Seventh. This does not prevent Mr. Seidelman from accusing me now of writing without having heard the music and of basing my contentions only on immature works, never on mature ones like the Seventh. That relieves me of any obligation to talk further with Mr. Seidelman.

B. H. HAGGIN
New York, October 1

A Protest

Dear Sirs: I must protest vigorously against the title which you gave to my article in the October 10 *Nation*. My original title when I left this article with you last spring was The Social Security Act: Reality. When I read proof of the article about a week ago the original title was retained. No one asked my permission to change my original title to the one you carried, Social Security Betrayed. I must make it clear to your readers that I am not responsible for the change in the title. ABRAHAM EPSTEIN
New York, October 7

Journalistic Correction

Dear Sirs: As a "journalist with long experience in power politics," McAlister Coleman, whom you describe as head of the information bureau of the Utility Users' Protection League of New Jersey, has certainly been wasting his time.

In your issue of September 19 Mr. Coleman discourses upon the Third World Power Conference with the utility baiter's customary inaccuracy. His worth as a reporter may be measured by his comparatively minor error in stating the amount appropriated by Congress for expenses of the conference. Mr. Coleman says it was $25,000. No cub reporter of average ability could have failed to know from official records and the voluminous press releases of the conference that Congress appropriated $75,000.

All by himself, Mr. Coleman discovered that the "private power gang" rushed into the breach with $100,000. The fact is, I am reliably informed, that the industry contributed to the expenses of the conference only in response to urgent importunities by the conference promoters. Anticipating that the meeting would be made a sounding-board for the New Deal power policies and public ownership, many of the utility executives favored non-participation. However, relying upon assurances of the conference managers (New Deal administration officials) that discussion of controversial subjects would be handled objectively and that politics, propaganda, and personalities would be barred, the electric utilities finally agreed to contribute $75,000, matching the government appropriation. The National Electrical Manufacturers' Association kicked in with $25,000.

In a quest for something that could be played up as a near-sensation, some newspaper reporters professed to see in the exit of certain individuals from a boresome session a "take a walk" movement by utility executives. Your journalistic contributor noted that "several utility men walked out in high dudgeon" in the face of a "blistering attack upon the holding-company regime" by Judge Healy. Since the eminent gentleman's paper had for several days been in the hands of utility men and others interested, it is strange that any utility men should become excited over the reading of a summary. GEORGE E. DOYING
Washington, October 10

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